

**MINUTES OF THE 2015-2016 INTERIM
ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO DEVELOP A PLAN TO
REORGANIZE THE CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

November 23, 2015

The meeting of the Advisory Committee to Develop a Plan to Reorganize the Clark County School District was called to order by Chair Michael Roberson at 9:26 a.m. at the Grant Sawyer Building, Room 4412, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada and via videoconference at the Legislative Building, Room 3137, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. Exhibit A is the Agenda and Exhibit B is the Attendance Roster. All exhibits are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT (LAS VEGAS):

Senator Michael Roberson, Senatorial District No. 20, Chair
Assemblywoman Olivia Diaz Assembly District No. 11, Vice Chair
Senator Moises (Mo) Denis, Senatorial District No. 2
Senator Aaron D. Ford, Senatorial District No. 11
Senator Joseph (Joe) P. Hardy, Senatorial District No. 12
Senator Becky Harris, Senatorial District No. 9
Assemblywoman Dina Neal, Assembly District No. 7
Assemblyman Stephen H. Silberkraus, Assembly District No. 29
Assemblyman Lynn D. Stewart, Assembly District No. 22

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Brenda Erdoes, Legislative Counsel, Legal Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau
Risa Lang, Chief Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau
Karly O'Krent, Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau
Julie Waller, Senior Program Analyst, Fiscal Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau
Kelly Richard, Principal Research Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau
Angela Hartzler, Secretary, Legal Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau
Linda Hiller, Interim Secretary, Legal Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau

OTHERS PRESENT:

Annalise Castor
Annette Dawson Owens
Evan James
Chad Leavitt, Member, Moapa Valley Community Education Advisory Board Task Force
Lindsey Dalley, Chair, Moapa Valley Community Education Advisory Board Task Force
Michael Griffith, Senior Policy Analyst, Education Commission of the States

Victoria Carreón, Director of Education Policy, Guinn Center for Policy Priorities
Judi Steele, President and CEO, Public Education Foundation
Staci Vesneske, Chief Human Resources Officer, Clark County School District
Jim McIntosh, Chief Financial Officer, Clark County School District
Pat Skorkowsky, Superintendent, Clark County School District
Vikki Courtney, President, Clark County Education Association
John Vellardita, Executive Director, Clark County Education Association

Chair Roberson:

I will open today's meeting with Item II, Public Comment.

Annalise Castor:

I am excited about this and for what you are doing. I am grateful for how you are looking to reform education here in Nevada. We formed a group called Break Free CCSD because we want to break free from mistakes and failures in the Clark County School District (CCSD) which we think this Advisory Committee will be able to help clear up. We are here and want to be part of the process.

Annette Dawson Owens:

I have attended kindergarten through 12th grade here in Henderson—at McCaw Elementary School, Burkholder Middle School and Basic High School. I have a master's degree in education and have taught and substituted at CCSD for 20 years. I have many friends who are teachers, principals and others in the education community.

I want to ask you to open your minds and think. Reorganize means to put things together in a new way. We could take every high school in Clark County and its feeder middle and elementary schools, and we could create a precinct where there are seats for everyone at the table, not just one seat. This is exciting. This is our chance to make a change. We will be a voice to our community to get involved and not let this long-awaited opportunity pass us by. We have no place to go but up.

Like Superintendent Skorkowsky, I taught kindergarten for a number of years. Who does not love a kindergarten teacher, right? Administrators and teachers like him. I trust that he and this Advisory Committee will do the right thing for our kids. We are on the same team.

But I have six children who have been going through CCSD, and sadly, I am less excited about my youngest kids and their future in this school district than my oldest kids. I am here to encourage this Advisory Committee to be a voice for our children, parents, teachers and community.

We need to remember the message we keep hearing—that our District is way too big, detached and dysfunctional. If our threefold goal really is to increase achievement, provide equity and have a better response to the community, why are we even talking

about seven precincts? Every study I have read shows that smaller school districts increase achievement. They are less expensive and more responsive to the community.

Senator Roberson, if you really want to solve the teacher shortage, I would love to have that discussion with you. Yes, I believe we can solve that problem too, by having smaller precincts and going back to the community. Several of you have talked about the balance of power and whether there will be any checks on the Instructional Precinct Superintendents. No, I do not believe there is, and we need a way to overrule them. We do not want someone pulling the trigger. We want the majority rule.

We do not want a seat at the table for Laughlin. Now, Laughlin, you have a seat at the table. No, Laughlin should be making up the table discussion, not being combined with other schools in Henderson and Boulder City. I could write a book about the inefficiencies of this big District. You have seen some of them and have talked about them in your meetings. I am going to stay positive, because despite all the garbage that comes from the top down just because we are such a big District, the fact remains that I love the good people who are dedicated and work for our District, including so many excellent educators.

We will continue to fight for what we know is right for our schools; to not keep or reelect officials who do not represent us or listen to our voice. This is an exciting time. That is why we are here. We will continue to stay this course for the coming 2-year marathon. We have formed Break Free CCSD to help our community break out of the mindset that we are limited to these same old seven precincts. If we can all choose to do what is best for our communities and go with what studies have proven is more effective, why are we not doing it?

Open your mind and think of it. Reorganize means to put things together in a new way. This is our chance. We are here for you and we will research and work hard. We are passionate to find the best solution for our kids with no other agenda except to restore the love for learning, educating and bringing community back to our schools.

Chair Roberson:

Are you from Laughlin?

Ms. Owens:

No, I live in Henderson. I brought up Laughlin because I noticed how it has been combined with different areas. I could have used another area like North Las Vegas, or Las Vegas, or the seven areas we are combining. It is just too much.

Evan James:

I am a CCSD parent and local attorney. As a parent, I have been involved with the District for years. As an attorney, I have litigated against the District and am presently doing so. The issues with the CCSD seem to be systemic. Many of the problems we

have discussed regarding the delivery of education to children seem to be also in the operational procedures of the District.

I have thought about these issues and boiled it down to what I would do if I was sitting in your seat. What would I be interested in? I came up with the three A's. The first A is access. What kind of access to the decision makers do the people being served by the District have? Without access, it is difficult to hold people accountable, which is the second A. The administrators, superintendent or even the parents have to be accountable. If there is no accountability, it is always someone else's problem. I have experienced this personally with my children in the CCSD, and I see that in my litigation against the District. There seems to be a lack of accountability.

The third A is autonomy. If you are creating accountability for parents and administrators, there has to be a level of autonomy so these people can succeed. Every time you have to go one step more to check and see if you can get keys for a school or if a school can get paper or whether you need to bid something a particular way, you create a situation where autonomy is lacking for the decision maker.

Those three A's are important. If I was sitting in your chairs, I would ask everybody who presents today what kind of access people will have to the decision makers; what kind of accountability will the decision makers and parents have and what kind of autonomy will people have to address the problems? Once you start addressing those three A's, you can have communities become invested in schools. When a community becomes invested in a school, that is when you see the changes take place in the education process. People who have autonomy and authority to act can make a difference. We can structure the system any way, but unless there is autonomy, authority and access, we will just be putting a new saddle on a dead horse. That is not what we want to do.

Chad Leavitt (Member, Moapa Valley Community Education Advisory Board Task Force):

I am a lifetime resident of Moapa Valley and a local business owner there. I have a degree in engineering and business. My wife and I have seven children, all in CCSD. I have been participating on the Moapa Valley Community Education Advisory Board Task Force to investigate what the Moapa Valley community members would like to see presented to this Advisory Committee. We have reviewed the financial implications and possibilities, and it has been challenging. Some reports show \$4.2 billion as the CCSD budget, some say a lot of that goes to capital construction. Some reports say there is \$3.7 billion. There is a lot of money out there. How we read Assembly Bill (A.B.) 394 is that the State money and all the local tax money will be given to each Instructional Precinct for the per-student basis.

ASSEMBLY BILL 394: Creates an advisory committee and a technical committee to develop a plan to reorganize the Clark County School District and revises certain provisions related to collective bargaining. (BDR 22-900)

Our analysis shows there would be inadequate funding to have a precinct in our local community. We do not have access to all the information, though. We do not know exactly how much it costs to run the buildings or how much the student materials cost. We have asked the District for these figures and we have received some general information, but we need specific numbers so we can do an accurate analysis of how much it will cost. We want the opportunity to talk to the chief financial officer or others in CCSD to come to the best resolution and make an educated decision.

I am excited about A.B. 394. It is an amazing opportunity to truly give power and control to local communities. I promise that as parents have power to really influence the education of their children, you will see improvement and results. Our local community has a lot of parental involvement. Currently, the majority of that time is spent trying to combat policies that are being presented, including sex education curriculum, some of that is offensive, and there is some discussion about transgender bathrooms. We are working to maintain the status quo when it would be so much more helpful if parents could be trying to enhance education, bring professional trades to our schools and do things that would actually put more kids into college and professional industries. I know local control can accomplish this, but that means local control of money and decisions, not centralized control. There cannot be a bureaucracy. We will help with this project however we can.

Lindsey Dalley (Chair, Moapa Valley Community Education Advisory Board Task Force):

We have several parents here from Moapa Valley (approximately 15 people stand in Las Vegas). These parents represent the face of what we are talking about. I brought copies of the November 18 issue of our local newspaper ([Exhibit C](#)), the Moapa Valley Progress, which has an accurate description of what happened at the last meeting of our Moapa Valley Community Education Advisory Board. That article indicates what happens when an entity like a school district gets too large and is not accountable.

Chair Roberson:

This Advisory Committee has a lot to accomplish. I will open Item IV, approval of the minutes from the October 12, 2015 meeting.

ASSEMBLYMAN STEWART MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE
OCTOBER 12, 2015 MEETING.

SENATOR HARDY SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chair Roberson:

I will open Item V, an update from the Technical Advisory Committee to Develop a Plan to Reorganize the CCSD.

Kelly Richard (Principal Research Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau):

The 24-member Technical Advisory Committee met on November 10, 2015 in Las Vegas at the Grant Sawyer Building. I have submitted a brief summary of the meeting ([Exhibit D](#)).

Chair Roberson:

I will open Agenda Item VI, a background and overview of other school districts' consolidation and deconsolidation efforts.

Michael Griffith (Senior Policy Analyst, Education Commission of the States):

This is an interesting topic. I am here to talk about what has happened in other states and to present you with some research and findings on this topic. The Education Commission of the States was created in 1965 to be a counterbalance to the U.S. Department of Education. We provide neutral information to states about education policy. We have 53 members that include 49 states, 3 territories and the District of Columbia. Washington State is the only nonmember state. Nevada is a member.

Understanding the topic of deconsolidation requires some history of how Nevada got here and how we got here nationally. I am using the term deconsolidation for any instance where a school district's powers were broken into subdivisions. Sometimes that means actually breaking one district apart into other districts and sometimes that means having smaller subdivisions but keeping the original district whole. I know this word deconsolidation is controversial and not part of your legislation, but it is easier to use it across all the examples in my presentation ([Exhibit E](#)). In the end, my hope is that you can all be on the same page, thinking about this topic and determining what your goals are, including what you want and what you do not want from this process.

We have had a history of consolidation in the U.S., but not much of deconsolidation. In 1940, there were 117,108 school districts in the country, with an average size of 219 students per district. By 1970, the number of school districts had declined to 17,995 with an average size of 2,530 students per district. One reason that occurred is because prior to 1940, school districts were centered within neighborhoods, small villages and cities.

In the 1940s and 1950s, studies showed the need for a more comprehensive education that prepared students for life after graduation. Some of the small districts could not do this for their smaller number of students and their schooling was uneven so districts were consolidated. Some of the consolidation was done to reduce cost, but the majority of districts combined with the goal of creating more comprehensive school districts.

Nevada mirrored that national trend. In 1956, when the Peabody Report for the State came out, it recommended that the existing 186 school districts be reduced to 17 county-wide districts. That was implemented and the average size of a Nevada school district went from 234 students in 1956, to 2,563 in 1957. The average size in 2012 was 25,860 students per school district, with the vast majority of Nevada students in CCSD.

On page 6 of my presentation ([Exhibit E](#)), you can see that for Clark County, this meant reducing 14 school districts into one district. Today, CCSD is the fifth largest school district in the U.S. serving 318,000 students with 15,000 teachers in 356 schools for more than \$3.16 billion in total revenue. If Clark County were a state, it would have student enrollment larger than 11 other states. For example, Vermont has approximately 25 percent fewer students, but it has more than 300 school districts with an average size of 288 students per district. Physically, Clark County is more than six times larger than Rhode Island.

Not only do you have a lot of students, but they are spread over a wide variant in both geography and demographics. If we broke Clark County back into its original 14 school districts, there would be an average school district size of approximately 22,000 students and 1,100 teachers in 25 schools per district, each covering 572 square miles. Still sizable districts. Since you are talking about going to seven Instructional Precincts, estimate each precinct would have approximately 44,000 students, 2,200 teachers and 50 schools covering more than 1,100 square miles.

National examples of consolidation are very common. There are dozens of high quality studies that show the best way to consolidate. On the flipside, there are not many examples of deconsolidation.

Senator Aaron D. Ford (Senatorial District No. 11):

When you were talking about the 14 school districts in the Las Vegas area in 1956, do you know where those districts were?

Mr. Griffith:

I was reading older documents and do not know this community well enough to answer that. There was a difference then because those were not all traditional K-12 school districts—there were some elementary school districts and high school districts, too. I could get that information for you.

Senator Ford:

I was just wondering, because if we break the existing CCSD into 14 different school districts, it would be important to have that information. Do you know what the facility divisions would be if we broke into 14 districts? We know now that the majority of the facilities would be located in the Las Vegas part of Clark County.

Would the facilities break down equally? I do not think so, but I would like to know what the demographic breakdown would be, what the facilities breakdown would be, what the teacher breakdown would be, and how would the money be divided up? I do not think the breakdown could be 22,000 students in 14 districts; because the vast majority of the students will be in the central part of the Las Vegas Valley.

Mr. Griffith:

This is one of the reasons you do not see many large school districts deconsolidating. It sounds easy enough to just do the math and evenly divide up students, teachers and school buildings in a perfect world, but that is not the reality of what is possible.

I want to cover three types of deconsolidation as illustrated on page 8 ([Exhibit E](#)). The first type is simply taking a large district and breaking it into separate autonomous districts. I know this is not what you are planning, but these types of break-ups can run into similar problems you would see with deconsolidation.

The second type of deconsolidation would create autonomist/semi-autonomist sub-districts. The original district would exist and oversee, but the precincts, as you call them in your Legislation, would still have powers and duties.

The third type of deconsolidation creates regional service areas. The initial district still has most of the power, but the service areas would have some powers and duties.

Nationally, the most common reason for deconsolidation is for socioeconomic and racial factors. That is not what you are proposing, but in the 1940s and the 1960s, many large school districts, most often in Southern states, were broken up along racial and economic lines for segregation purposes. What happened was that city districts were formed since the majority of people living in those neighborhoods were African American and the majority of the people in the rest of the county were Caucasian. This is not a proud moment in our history and we still struggle with it in some of the Southern states, but you can look at maps of school districts in those states and see county-wide districts and a smattering of city districts and it's almost always majority African American in those city districts.

Starting in the 1960s, that movement began to stop as the U.S. government made statements disallowing racial breakdown in school districts. One example is Memphis City Schools (MCS) in Tennessee. It was its own district, comprised largely of poor African Americans. The rest of the county, Shelby County, was its own district, comprised largely of wealthy Caucasians. In 2011, MCS voted to disband. Under Tennessee law, that meant it would become part of the Shelby County School District. In the next year, the state passed legislation to the wealthy districts to break apart from the Shelby County School District. There was maneuvering in court, laws were changed, and six suburban school districts were allowed to form. Back to square one.

The U.S. government chose not to intervene. In the end, there was not much of a change for the students.

In Omaha, Nebraska, page 12 ([Exhibit E](#)), the district was not broken apart initially for racial reasons, but that is how it ended up. The Omaha School District (OSD) had been given power to annex certain smaller, unincorporated areas and bring them into the OSD largely for tax purposes. Some small districts pushed back and did not want Omaha to absorb them. Legislation was passed to take the annexing power away from the OSD, and at the same time, it was broken into three separate school districts. The feeling was that Omaha had become too big and was overstepping its bounds, so the state decided breaking the district apart was the best solution. At 45,000 students, the Omaha district is much smaller than CCSD, but in Nebraska it is considered very large; twice the size of the next biggest district in Lincoln.

The way the OSD was broken up was based on the number of high schools, which made for an even division. The elementary and junior high feeder schools would then go with each high school. It created three school districts—one that was majority Caucasian, one that was majority African American and one that was majority Hispanic. This does not seem to be the Legislators' intention, but it worked out that way. There was a great deal of negative feedback from the general community and the business community. Even native son Warren Buffett, the billionaire "Sage of Omaha" and owner of Berkshire Hathaway, came out against the proposed divisions. There was a threat of litigation and of the U.S. government stepping in, so the plan was dropped and the OSD never broke up.

Another reason for deconsolidation is for greater local control in response to a perceived lack of connection between school districts and their schools, parents, students and community. For example, if you wanted to bring in an Advanced Placement program to your high school in a school district as large as CCSD, it is hard to have that kind of access and input. Families feel they need some direct line to their policymakers. Many school districts in the U.S. have talked about this, places like Chicago and Philadelphia—even though they have not done much about it, they realize it is a problem when a school district becomes too big.

There are examples of ways not to deconsolidate. In California, the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) was struggling with pushback about the lack of local control. The LAUSD serves 634,000 students, including several smaller communities that border Los Angeles. In 2000, the decision was made to divide the LAUSD into 11 local districts. There was never a clear definition of the local districts' functions and powers. The plan was developed in 2 months, allowing the LAUSD only 81 days to implement it.

From the beginning, it became clear there was no clear vision of how this LAUSD deconsolidation should proceed and operate. Years later, the decision was made to reduce the eleven local districts to eight. After that, they changed the number to five,

then later to six local districts. The borders of these districts changed each time this happened. It was possible that if a student started in the pre-kindergarten program in that school district and graduated in 2015, he or she could have moved through six iterations of the LAUSD, in six different local districts.

Today, it is still unclear what the local districts do—can they make policy, do they have autonomy, can they adopt new programs and curriculum? All the power has remained at the LAUSD level. This has not worked well, and even people there admit it.

New York City did something different in their deconsolidation. The New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) governs the city's public school system, overseeing an enrollment of 937,000, the largest in the country. In its deconsolidation, the NYCDOE retained the majority of policy control while creating 32 smaller geographic districts. Each of these smaller districts serves around 30,000 students and has its own superintendent and advisory board comprised of teachers, parents and community members. The power and flexibility of each of those 32 geographic districts is clearly defined, while the majority of decisions come from the NYCDOE.

In 2002, the NYCDOE created what they called school networks, combining approximately 25 schools in geographic districts with similar schools. These networks are not formed on geographic lines. Each network is staffed with 14 support staff that help these similar schools develop learning plans to help with issues including teacher professional training, staff professional development and other topics of interest. So far, this is working in New York City even though there is still a feeling of wanting greater local control from some parents.

The final reason for deconsolidation is to save money. A large school district can suffer what economists call “diseconomies of scale.” If a district gets too large, the cost per pupil will increase, making a smaller school district cheaper to run than a large one. There is not a lot of research on this, especially when trying to pinpoint the uppermost enrollment number that will trigger the downward diseconomies of scale. Some state studies indicate that number could be 30,000 students while others have mentioned 50,000 or 80,000 students as the uppermost numbers. There is no definitive data on this, but it is clear that many large school districts like CCSD are delivering education at a higher rate of cost per child than smaller districts.

The problem is that large school districts are not comparable to average-sized districts. Large school districts in the U.S. deal with large urban populations where delivering services is more expensive. These large districts also tend to have significantly higher Free and Reduced-Price Lunch (FRL) rates than traditional districts. It is like comparing apples and oranges.

We know that larger, overriding school districts can still deliver some services—capital, food services, high needs special education and transportation—at a lower cost per

pupil. If CCSD were to break into any number of Instructional Precincts, it would likely still be better to have the District deliver those aforementioned services instead of at the Instructional Precinct level.

Studies show that for real long-term cost savings, it is better to break up a large school district into separate autonomous school districts than it is to deconsolidate. In Utah, the Jordan School District (JSD), enrollment 80,000, was split in half to the Jordan School District and the Canyons School District for reasons of providing more local control. The two districts were very similar demographically.

When this district broke in two in 2009, it cost around \$59 million to create the separate administrative offices and hire additional administrators to operate two school districts, among other expenses. Dividing the assets, such as school buses, buildings, copy machines and such, is still an issue between the two districts, even 6 years after the actual physical split and 8 years after the official vote to divide. However, the overall cost savings is expected to happen over time. The Canyons School District is now considering breaking up.

All these examples illustrate the need for a plan if you want to deconsolidate. Some questions should be asked when you are envisioning your new system of delivering public education. For example, how large will the new school district or Instructional Precincts be? Do you want them all the same size? That is almost impossible, given mere geography, which would point toward breaking up the school district instead.

When LAUSD broke their district up, the local district sizes ranged from 75,000 to 150,000 students. It was initially divided based on geographical size, but when it was re-divided based on population, the southern region ended up about one-third the size of the entire school district. If you break up based on population, there will be geographically different sized districts. If you break it up based on physical size, there will be different enrollment numbers in each Instructional Precinct.

It is important to ensure you are not breaking CCSD up on racial, ethnic or economic lines. This will be difficult because in most communities there are neighborhoods with certain ethnic, racial and socioeconomic groups. It is always difficult to divide these neighborhoods and have it be perfectly representative of the overall school district.

Another important issue to consider when deconsolidating is what the enrollment policies will be. If a student lives in Instructional Precinct 1 but wants to attend school in Instructional Precinct 2, will you allow that? What if the student lives in Instructional Precinct 1 but is closer to the school in Instructional Precinct 2? Could a student attend a school that is not in their assigned Instructional Precinct, but instead go to a school that better fits their special needs?

If you chose to break the CCSD up, it could take several years. The division of assets and liabilities would have to be addressed. Also, if you break apart, the investors who buy bonds and the owners of your current bonds will be nervous. They do not like change, and you could see the rates you pay for capital spending raised. That might be something you always want to leave at the Clark County level.

If you set up Instructional Precincts, there will need to be additional administrative offices. You will want local representation at those locations. How many people will staff that office? Will it have full power? There may be available buildings in some Instructional Precincts, but in others, buildings would need to be built.

You would also want to ask if the main district would still supply services and if so, what would those be? You would have to ensure that the new districts complied with Nevada law as well as federal law. There could be difficulties with federal laws like Title I and the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) if you split.

There is no research telling how many Instructional Precincts would be the best number for your deconsolidation. Some research on the economies of scale indicates the 30,000 to 80,000 student enrollment per district, as was mentioned before. For CCSD, this would break down to four to ten Instructional Precincts. The next question would be how to staff each Instructional Precinct and what the enrollment policies will be.

Page 24 ([Exhibit E](#)) lists many other issues to consider with deconsolidation. Alternative schools, for example, are usually run at a district level. If a student needs an alternative school not in their Instructional Precinct, how would you handle that? Career and technical education is likewise tailored to the student, so where do those students go to obtain that education? Collective bargaining is also usually done on a district level. Would you have each Instructional Precinct participate, or do it from the overall district? Would you vary the course and grade offerings from precinct to precinct? If so, what if a student transfers—and this school district has a fairly high mobility rate—would they lose out on studies or be behind at his or her new school? Other issues including food services, special education and transportation would all have to be dealt with in deconsolidation.

Teacher school assignment, tying in with the collective bargaining agreements, could be a challenging issue. If a teacher wants to move from Instructional Precinct 1 to Instructional Precinct 2, could he or she do that? What does that mean for the precinct that loses transferring teachers? That is a huge issue. When we talk about an equal division of money between precincts or districts, the biggest expenditure—up to 65 percent—is teacher salaries and benefits. Higher paid teachers are those who have been in the system longer, and those are generally the ones who can choose where they teach. We see more senior teachers gravitate toward certain schools and away from others. When you divide into Instructional Precincts, I can almost guarantee you

will not have an equal distribution of senior teachers, which translates to unequal spending.

What if you divide the money equally between Instructional Precincts? If one precinct has a larger number of senior teachers, would you force some of those to another precinct to balance the money? In the past, we have seen that when school districts do this, teachers will quit that school district. Senior teachers are closer to retirement and may take early retirement instead of being forced to teach at a school they do not choose. Other teachers will look for work in other school districts. This is a big issue.

Another issue to consider with regional service areas where there is not as much power or autonomy, is what your expectations are and how you will measure their value. In New York City's regional service areas, there are not enough measures to determine if goals are being met or if the system is a success or not. If you implement that system here, you would need to determine the power these areas should have, how that power will be delivered and what action will be taken if there is conflict with the overseeing school district. Determining the number and skills of school personnel to run these Instructional Precincts will be another challenge.

If you consider breaking up the CCSD instead of deconsolidating, each separate school district would need its own taxing and spending authority that could make decisions on spending and revenue. Then the question of whether the CCSD should still provide some services could be examined.

Breaking up a school district or creating sub-districts could also create a delay in having Title I federal dollars follow the qualifying student to his or her new school or district. Those dollars generally have a 2-year lag time. This happened in Detroit Public Schools after breaking into two school districts—the traditional district and an authority district. The authority district took the worst 12 schools and created a sub-district. Because of that split, the federal money did not follow immediately into the new district. This lapse was not budgeted for, so that district was short \$2 million at the end of the first budget year. Title I calculations could potentially be different if a district divides into two or more school districts. It is a very technical issue, but important to consider.

Looking at the Legislation for this reorganization, A.B. 394, you are required to ensure that CCSD is funded in accordance with the Nevada Plan and that funding will be distributed on a per pupil basis to the newly created precincts. That confuses me. If you are saying, for example, that you are going to provide each Instructional Precinct the exact same amount of capital spending, is that fair? Some precincts will have higher growth and will need more money. Some precincts will have older buildings, others will have newer buildings. Each Instructional Precinct will not need the same amount of capital spending. The way the Legislation reads, you will be providing the precincts all the same capital spending, regardless of their needs. What if one Instructional Precinct

has a higher percentage of at-risk students or English Language Learner (ELL) students? How do you make those calculations on a per pupil basis?

Issues like transportation and special education would cost different amounts in each Instructional Precinct. That would need to be defined. Maybe the Legislature can clarify what “per pupil” means in terms of fairly dividing funds among Instructional Precincts.

If you break into the Instructional Precincts and there is not a real change in the way schools are constructed, you will probably be okay with federal funding, but you should check on that.

If instead you choose to break CCSD into regional service areas, that would not likely change the way federal dollars are distributed to the school districts. There would need to be some special allocation for the regional boards or regional superintendent, but other than that, the State and federal dollars should remain the same.

It may sound like I am telling you horrible things that can happen with deconsolidation or breaking up a school district as large as CCSD, but I am telling you these things so you can know what the issues are. You have time. In the next 18 months, you can address many of these issues and hopefully, you will not run into the problems many other school districts have encountered.

Assemblyman Lynn D. Stewart (Assembly District No. 22):

In 1957, what were the reasons the 14 Las Vegas area school districts wanted to consolidate into the CCSD?

Mr. Griffith:

I read two reports on that—the Peabody Report and a report the Legislature generated in 1991. It appears it was the State that wanted the consolidation because there were too many school districts. There were seven different types of school districts in the State at the time—elementary districts, junior high districts, high school districts and some specialty districts. The feeling was that there were too many districts and too many types of districts, most of which were unable to provide all the services students needed.

Assemblyman Stewart:

There was no outcry from the smaller districts asking to consolidate?

Mr. Griffith:

Not that I saw in the two studies I read.

Assemblywoman Dina Neal (Assembly District No. 7):

I did some research and see that Omaha has a high population of African American and Latino students. Historically, back to 2010, the city shows growth, but for African

Americans in grades 3 through 8 and 11, which are their state testing ages, for 2014-2015, these students were 34 percent proficient. When you go back to 2011, those students were at 23 percent proficiency. Hispanic students were at 44 percent proficiency for 2014-2015 and 31 percent proficient in 2011. The deconsolidation took place in 2006, and now we are in 2015, and there are still kids failing in Omaha. I did look at New York City and Los Angeles and saw similar trends there. Can you explain?

Mr. Griffith:

In the end, Omaha never broke off. They talked about it, passed Legislation, but in 2008, they pulled the plug. When their deconsolidation was going through, there was no talk about student improvement. That was not why it was going to be done. Instead, it was done for taxation and regional power reasons. There were also people in the Omaha Public Schools district who saw a provision within Nebraska law that would make it advantageous to break the district into three districts. It would have brought in more money from the state. This was why some legislators supported the breakup. They did not see the dividing lines, but when they did, they backtracked. Because the original district did not break up, the performance data is not really applicable to the breakup of the school district, and the initial goal was never to improve student performance; it was to make more money from the state.

Assemblywoman Neal:

Did they move to more local control even though they did not break up?

Mr. Griffith:

There was a little more local control. In 2007, the Nebraska Legislature created a “learning community” which includes 11 school districts near and including Omaha, to share revenue and education expertise. Essentially, that means the surrounding wealthier school districts shift some money to Omaha. This took the power and ability to annex away from the Omaha Public Schools district.

Assemblywoman Neal:

In the New York City deconsolidation, they put out guidelines and took the issue to the people. Their 2014 data for grades 3 through 8 showed only 22 percent of all students testing at grade level, with only 9 percent scoring above grade level. This was their English Language Arts assessment. Math test results were similar—22 percent scored at grade level and 16 percent scored above grade level. Can you explain this?

Mr. Griffith:

This is one of the difficulties of different tests in different states. The State of New York made the decision to have extremely difficult tests that have a high number of students scoring as though they are not performing to grade level. Westchester County, New York, north of New York City, is arguably the wealthiest county in America. School districts there spend approximately \$20,000 to \$25,000 per student in public education, almost at a private school level. Some of those schools have only 40 percent of their

students testing at grade level, which shocked parents there. These are school districts that potentially send 60 percent of their students to Ivy League schools, one principal told me, and nearly 100 percent to 4-year universities.

The reason New York chose to move to the more difficult testing system is because Massachusetts has been using those exams and found that eventually the students rose to that level of difficulty, producing some of the highest student test results in the country. New York may have been hoping for the same end result. It is hard to say.

This illustrates the difficulty in deconsolidating or even consolidating—we do not always have great tests and measures to accurately assess if a system is succeeding or failing. Because of that, we cannot really compare New York to Los Angeles or Clark County on student achievement, comparing before and after statistics. The only national test that shows consistency is the National Assessment of Educational Progress from the U.S. government. However, not enough students in each school district take that exam so it does not allow district-to-district comparisons.

I wish we had better numbers. Some of the other numbers we tend to look at—high school graduation rates, college attendance rates—might be better. I do not know what happened in New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) with those rates.

Assemblywoman Neal:

It sounds like economic disparity may have created change and more money was added to certain places, whereas certain public schools were still dealing with their issues and population, not seeing change because of cost.

Assemblywoman Olivia Diaz (Assembly District No. 11):

On page 20 of your presentation ([Exhibit E](#)), you reference the Jordan School District in Utah splitting into two school districts at a cost of \$59 million. You said there might be an overall cost savings down the road. What would those cost savings would be?

Mr. Griffith:

When you consider the diseconomies of scale, some of these school districts get so large it starts costing more per pupil to deliver services. This is sometimes due to multiple layers of bureaucracy, so the large districts have higher administrative costs than the smaller districts. Some of this is theoretical since there is not enough data from districts that have deconsolidated. What took place in the Jordan School District will probably give us some good answers after a decade or so, but I cannot tell you today if there were cost savings or not.

In the NYCDOE, some sub-districts have their own staff and administrators; the 32 geographic regions have their own staff and administrators, and then there is the overlying district's staff and administrators. If you are a principal there, you may have to go through up to ten people to get to your superintendent. Most school districts in the

country do not have that layer of administration to go through from teacher or principal to district superintendent.

At the Houston Independent School District, enrollment 213,000, the superintendent set a goal to visit every school in the school district by visiting five schools every Friday. It was going to take her two years. This is the reality of a large school district. The average school district in the U.S. has seven to ten schools. When you are looking at a school district with 350 schools, there is a disconnect. A superintendent cannot oversee all those people, so there have to be assistant superintendents and regional superintendents to facilitate communication. The feeling is that there are higher levels of bureaucracy to deal with in a large district, which costs more. Remember that up to 65 percent of the cost in any school district is teacher salaries and benefits. Administrative costs average around 5 percent to 7 percent, which is where you could find some savings.

Assemblywoman Diaz:

On page 24 of the presentation ([Exhibit E](#)) you list issues to look at when planning a deconsolidation. Something near and dear to us is the teachers. You spoke about treading lightly in the policy of a new organization when dealing with teacher school choice. Do you have recommendations for solving this issue, both economically and in teacher retention? I do not want to see us put something into place where we lose more teachers and exacerbate the teacher shortage issue.

Mr. Griffith:

Where this has happened in other places, not necessarily in deconsolidation, but in locales that have aimed for greater local control, is starting to budget at the school level instead of at the district level.

There are some really good studies looking at large school districts that spend disproportional amounts in certain schools. Much of this disproportional spending comes from teacher assignment and some of it comes from the fact that, for various reasons, some schools just get more of everything. It tends to be that schools in wealthier neighborhoods get things like more janitors and librarians. Some attribute this to the squeaky wheel issue where parents at those wealthier schools work the system better than others.

Some school districts like Seattle and Houston have decided to budget at a school level. To do that, these districts realized they had to commit to not moving teachers, even though it cost more at some schools. From there, the hiring of new teachers could be done only if there were sufficient funds at that school. This way, if there was not a budget to add another senior teacher to a school that already had a large teaching budget because of their existing senior teachers, then the school had to hire a new teacher. Another school in the same district with a lower budget could hire the senior

teacher. Bonuses for at-risk schools turns out to be something these schools can do when they budget at the school level.

Chair Roberson:

You described three types of deconsolidation on page 8 of your presentation ([Exhibit E](#)). One is breaking a large school district into several smaller school districts, which is not what we are mandated to do here. The third type of deconsolidation you described creates regional services areas with all powers still controlled at the district level. That is also not what we are mandated to create from A.B. 394. But the second type of deconsolidation you listed there is what we are mandated to do—to create autonomist or semi-autonomist units within the district, with the district and sub-units each assigned powers/duties. I would like to zero in on that.

I know this is not a simple process, but as we look at how we create Instructional Precincts and delegate powers and responsibilities to them, I would like to hear your thoughts on how we best do that.

Mr. Griffith:

Back to page 24 of ([Exhibit E](#)), there are some duties and powers on that list that clearly need to remain at the CCSD level. That includes capital spending, capital fundraising, food services, transportation and high needs special education students. Research shows that when you deal with high needs special education students, the larger you are and the more students you serve, the lower the cost and the better the services you can provide. It is win-win.

Some of the categories I would probably put at the CCSD level would include alternative schools because it would be hard to imagine that each Instructional Precinct could have its own alternative school system. Career and technical education is trickier because in many ways it could be delivered cheaper through the CCSD but if each Instructional Precinct is to be allowed to make curriculum decisions and if the overriding district governs career and technical subjects, then the school does not get to include that in their own curriculum. Economically, it makes sense to have the district control that, but policy-wise, maybe not.

Collective bargaining is a tricky issue. Should it be at each of the Instructional Precincts? Is part of it going to be done at the overriding district with the Instructional Precincts having agreement on certain things? Should collective bargaining remain at the overriding district? I see plusses and minuses to each approach. There is not much research on how to do collective bargaining in a deconsolidation, so you will have to make decisions based on your own priorities.

Course and grade offerings go along with collective bargaining. If your agreement is negotiated at the CCSD level and your Instructional Precinct wants to have different types of course and grade offerings, how do you do that? If you allow for district-wide

collective bargaining, you will probably have to go with district-wide course and grade offerings, and vice versa.

Teacher school assignments is also a complicated issue. If it is governed at the CCSD level, it will create budgetary problems at the Instructional Precinct level.

The first thing you have to do is decide what powers you want at the CCSD level and what you want the Instructional Precincts to achieve? How many Instructional Precincts do you want? Once you decide that, go back and make decisions about where the powers should be distributed. If there will be no power given to the Instructional Precincts, then many of these things are already decided. If you are going to say the Instructional Precincts are completely autonomous, then other than those first couple of things I mentioned, you can delegate all the other powers and duties to the Instructional Precinct level and the district would be the supervisory union that will provide certain services, probably charging each of the Instructional Precincts for those services.

Chair Roberson:

I would like to see every major township and municipality, parent group and community group in Clark County express to this Committee and the Technical Advisory Committee what functions they would like to see more local control over. We have not heard from any other local governments or communities besides Moapa at this point. It would be beneficial for us to hear from those groups and local communities.

Senator Joseph (Joe) P. Hardy (Senatorial District No. 12):

Our Nevada Plan is unique. We allocate per pupil spending on the operational budget but not the capital spending. If we did operational, the capital would still be contestable, because if you have the overriding capital expense, you are still going to have that jockeying for position to get capital money. Has anyone else done that?

Mr. Griffith:

The term supervisory union is named differently in many states—county-wide district, service district, Boards of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES) in Colorado and New York—but it refers to a big area that serves multiple school districts. Sometimes, capital funding is done through these organizations. There is usually a letter of agreement between all the school districts that feed into the supervisory union. You would have to do that, I think, by looking at all the schools and student populations in the CCSD and create a 10-year plan on how the capital will be distributed.

As you say, capital spending is very different than operational spending. The needs and costs are different, so you would need a plan. I would keep them separate, and I might include transportation as a third funding area to be separated. You have to consider situations like if a student is going to a career and technical education program run by the school district, will they have transportation and if so, who will pay for that? This can be a big problem, just like the open enrollment issue I spoke to earlier. No matter how

you subdivide the District, you will have kids that live in one Instructional Precinct who are closer to a school in another Instructional Precinct. How will you deal with that?

Assemblyman Stewart:

Can you give us any examples of powers that were exercised by the subgroups in a deconsolidation which proved to be an improvement over having the overriding district in control?

Mr. Griffith:

There are not enough examples with deconsolidation, but districts that have moved to school-based management get a lot of positive feedback from the parents and communities. It seems to facilitate changes to curriculum that tailors programs to students in those schools. For example, if a school makes a decision to implement an International Baccalaureate® program, that can happen quickly. The school personnel can decide it is right for them and they will then reassign teachers and resources and it can be done.

If those decisions are being made at the district level, it can take years since the school has to make the request, the decision has to then be made in the district office and then the permission goes back to the school to be implemented. So parents do like local control. You might see this in your Instructional Precinct system also.

Assemblyman Stewart:

What about lengthening the school schedule or whether or not to have year-round schools, have you seen those issues in other areas?

Mr. Griffith:

Yes, deciding to go to a longer day because there are a lot of latchkey kids in a school can happen, or blending some career and technical education programs into the curriculum, or even adding in weekend programs that serve student populations have all been utilized. Some of that will depend on the collective bargaining agreements and how much power is going to be delegated to the Instructional Precincts.

The National Center on Time & Learning works with individual schools to lengthen their school day at no additional cost. They do this in places with pretty tough collective bargaining agreements, like Boston, where they are based. If the collective bargaining agreement has an allowance for extending the school day, it is much easier.

Senator Ford:

One good thing about this Committee is that we have diversity of thought on these issues. I share some of the concerns raised but plan to concentrate on the equity issues. Can you give me an example of a school district comparable to CCSD demographically that has successfully undergone what we are trying to do here, the second option on page 8 of your presentation ([Exhibit E](#))?

Mr. Griffith:

I cannot. There are only about five or six school districts in the country that I could compare to CCSD. This is because your district is large, both in student population and in physical size and it covers multiple cities, each with different demographics. I have hundreds of examples of consolidation, but there are not a lot of examples of deconsolidation of school districts, either into separate districts or into autonomous precincts as you are proposing. I struggled with this as I put together my report.

The Houston Independent School District gave more power, including limited curriculum and financial decisions, to their individual schools with some success. It did not change student outcomes, but it improved the satisfaction with the neighborhood school by surrounding communities and parents.

Senator Ford:

I would appreciate more data on what Houston did. I know size is a big factor for our district, but district size aside, is there any locale with a comparable demography to the Las Vegas area that has gone to more local control successfully while maintaining equity and diversity? Also, as comported with federal law as it regards segregation and inappropriate demarcations along racial lines, is there a location that has succeeded with their deconsolidation?

Mr. Griffith:

No. There are 13,500 school districts in the U.S. Only about 100 are large enough that they would even think about deconsolidating. In actuality, it is only the top 20 largest school districts that have either looked into deconsolidation or actually tried to move some decision-making to the local level. There is a spotty track record on this.

In the School District of Philadelphia, the State of Pennsylvania decided to have different organizations run groups of schools. It was not really breaking up their school district, but it was similar. It was an experiment where they used a private company running some schools, a nonprofit running some other schools, and the original district running the remaining schools. Eventually, the control of all schools reverted to the School District of Philadelphia. There were many political and financial issues when that happened and many in the city had questions about a private provider running public schools. The nonprofit provider was well intentioned, but bit off more than they could chew.

When the Chicago Public Schools district attempted to move some controls to the school level, it was complicated because the mayor controls the school district in that city. School district personnel talked about making the move, but the mayor did not want to relinquish the control. New York City has the same mayor-controlled school district system, and when the mayor runs the school district, he or she makes a lot of decisions, and does not like losing that power. Since the mayor is an elected position, the worry is that if the school district fails, the voters will blame them for poorly run schools.

Senator Ford:

We have talked about student achievement and I think that is what our focus should be. I do not see much data in your presentation about increased student achievement. I would like to have before and after data on some of the school districts you have discussed today so we could compare. We do not want to be doing something just for the sake of doing it. If we are not improving student achievement, what are we really talking about?

Chair Roberson:

As we look at the mandate from A.B. 394, it is to increase equity, student achievement and increased efficiency in delivering education services. As we look to create precincts, whether autonomous or semi-autonomous, how can we develop those precincts to ensure we fulfill those mandates from our Legislation?

I share Senator Ford's concern. We know the schools in CCSD which have consistently underperformed. Those schools also have the highest teacher vacancies and the high percentages of students eligible for Free and Reduced-Price Lunch (FRL). We are all concerned with improving student achievement in those schools. As we consider how to change to a precinct system, changing the delivery of services, resources and control, are there any issues you think we need to keep in mind?

Mr. Griffith:

The very first thing you need to do is to determine how much power should go to the Instructional Precincts. What do you want them to achieve? How large should each one be? This is very difficult, because the difference between 50 precincts versus 5 precincts is significant.

Once you make those key decisions—the biggest, hardest questions of all—then you can step back and start dividing and making decisions. For example, if you have five precincts, it would make sense to have alternative schools in each precinct, but if you have 50 precincts, it would not make sense to have transportation separate for that many precincts.

If Instructional Precincts are allowed to make curriculum decisions, which many parents want, what if each precinct makes different curriculum decisions and you know there is a high percentage of students who move around the District? This could not only be a real hardship for these kids, but adapting something like transportation to different start times or schoolyear lengths, for example, would be a challenge. You would need to decide if school schedules would be synchronized district-wide to address that issue.

The student outcomes, greater equity and more efficiency are certainly the big overlying issues for you to answer in this Committee. But underneath that, you must decide how to enable the Instructional Precincts to achieve these goals and what will they can and cannot do. In this instance, the “not do” is just as important as the “do.”

This is why it is difficult for me to give you clear answers, because when you ask how should we construct these Instructional Precincts, it is a very different construction if you say we are not going to let them make curriculum decisions, or we are going to have a single collective bargaining agreement for the district, or we are not going to let them make decisions and we are still going to provide all special education services and all at-risk services at the district level. That is a very different Instructional Precinct with a very different set of powers than if you say we are going to let them do everything, and each precinct can make all their own decisions. If you have 50 little precincts that can make all their own decisions, it is very different than if you have 5 precincts that make very few decisions.

One of the difficulties is that you were not given a number or an ideal size for each Instructional Precinct. As I understand it, this Committee needs to come up with that. When you come up with the right size, I would recommend doing it based on student population rather than geography. That will cause some issues, though, because the center Instructional Precinct in Las Vegas will be significantly smaller geographically than the outlying area precincts. If you divide the precincts geographically, there will be some Instructional Precincts in the outlying areas that are large with not many students. If you divide geographically, you will have the precincts all the same size geographically, but you would have one precinct serving 10,000 kids and another serving 100,000 kids.

There is no research that definitively points to a perfect size for a school district. The preponderance of evidence points to it being between 30,000 and 50,000 students, which would put CCSD between 7 and 10 Instructional Precincts. Keep that number in mind as you continue to discuss this.

Assemblywoman Neal:

What comparative analysis did you do on our magnet schools or empowerment models? Did you notice any flaws in what we have been doing compared to what other schools in other states are doing?

Secondly, in your analysis on the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), which now has the five smaller local districts under their LAUSD umbrella with operations and instruction separated, what did you find were there successes or weaknesses? I am speaking in their control over curriculum, because now there are five people overseeing instruction at each smaller district. Also what were the issues with operation challenges since they did try to break it out. Clearly, they were trying to drill down to have better local access for people wanting to talk about instruction and curriculum. That school district has 646,000 students while San Diego Unified School District has 129,000 students. We are in the middle of them size-wise and both are cities.

Mr. Griffith:

I did not do an analysis of the CCSD magnet schools, but it is something you should look at. In fact, it would be good to do an analysis of all the nontraditional programs and see what is spent on those programs. Big overriding school districts do not think that way, but you will have to start thinking that way because at some point, the magnet schools, alternative program schools, and career and technical programs have to be paid for. The per pupil spending for those nontraditional schools needs to be known. That way you will know how to handle a situation where a student wants to attend a magnet school run by the overriding district versus the Instructional Precinct. Does the student get to choose to go to that school? Does the magnet school get to choose students? What if the magnet school takes in mostly kids from Precinct 1 but not Precinct 5? How do you work that out? Does the magnet school have to take an equal number of students from each precinct? If the school district pays for alternative schools, how do you divide it up? What if one precinct is taking a lot of advantage with career and technical education because they figure out that sending kids there means that Instructional Precinct does not have to pay for that student out of their budget because the district is paying for it? We have seen this in other districts. It is not the right thing to do, but it can happen.

Regarding the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) and its breakout of smaller, local districts, I talked to people who were involved in the breakup and the overriding feeling was that the District kept changing the system because they were getting negative feedback. The District would provide some powers out to the local districts and some people felt it was not enough but others thought it was too much. Almost every year it would change regarding what the local districts' authorities were. The five-unit subgroup of local districts lasted from 2012 to 2015. The new superintendent has now changed it to six local districts that are geographically-based and the powers have changed again.

This is a good example of why you need to make these power decisions up front and also why you should set aside some funding for training people who will be working in the Instructional Precincts. Those individuals need to know how to handle the new power, what can be done with it and how to achieve goals. This is what LAUSD did not do. People there said, "We just kept changing it, we thought we were doing the right thing, but we have made it confusing for people at the local district levels." Since those people at those smaller districts were not clear on where their authority began and where it ended, they basically abstained from making any decisions. They just continued with the status quo.

The more you talk about this and make it clear what your Instructional Precincts can and cannot do, providing them with resources, the better off you will be. You could consider a trial year, where you put people in place and try it. Then you could fully implement it later. They did not do this in Los Angeles. The LAUSD had a plan that they

came up with in 2 months and implemented in 81 days without training. It was done in 2001 and they are still suffering with it.

San Diego Unified School District was one of the first school districts in the country to decide to cut down the number of administrators. The District pushed the power to the school level years ago. However, they did not provide people at the school level with training or support and a lot of the school principals said they did not have the ability to do school budgeting at the school level, much less the time to do it. They also complained of not having enough curriculum training to understand how to change curriculum to best help their students. After about 2 years, the District reversed and moved the powers back to the District level.

This does not mean it cannot work to move power to the schools. I worked in Houston. But it means you have to come up with a plan and provide training and support for your new Instructional Precinct administrators.

Senator Moises (Mo) Denis (Senatorial District No. 2):

In your research, what have you seen as the overarching purpose of school districts that consolidated?

Mr. Griffith:

To provide kids with a better comprehensive education. The school districts in the 1940s, before all this consolidation took place, tended to be very small and provided varying services. Studies began to show that the small school districts were not providing the needed services for kids. There needed to be enough students so there could be a teacher for each grade level and a high school environment that would give kids what they needed, especially preparation for college.

More recently, the consolidations have occurred for reasons of cost savings. Some small districts have a higher cost per pupil, especially when the district is smaller than 1,000 kids. When the enrollment is below 100 students, it gets very costly. There are also consolidations to provide additional services, but the reasons are usually economical. The feeling has been that the bigger you are, the more you can provide for kids.

Senator Denis:

Is deconsolidation then more about achieving local control?

Mr. Griffith:

I would say so. I have heard more talk about deconsolidation in the last several years and I think this is due to parents becoming more involved in their children's education and becoming frustrated in large school districts where they may not feel their voice is being heard. Every large school district is struggling with how to better communicate with parents and give them opportunities for input. Most districts are looking at things

other than deconsolidation—providing additional powers to schools and forming community input groups. If you do end up deconsolidating, you will be an example for other districts to look at.

Senator Denis:

Regarding the Jordan School District in Utah that divided in two, adding the Canyon School District (CSD), which now is thinking of dividing again, I hear the CSD is doing fairly well academically and athletically. The Jordan School District (JSD) is now looking at four other school districts being able to provide it more funds because JSD was left without funding. It sounds like they are going to split even more. Can you elaborate?

Mr. Griffith:

Physically, that was a very large school district, encompassing multiple communities. Like Clark County, when a school district covers more than a single city, it has less of a connection. Those other entities have their own mayors, county and city boards and they want their own autonomy. That is what is happening in Jordan.

This movement toward local control and greater parental input is a trend, and it has occurred in other states that have pushed for charter schools. Parents can have influence on charter schools, which are really just individual school districts with a single school. In some states, charter schools do not have all the authority or ability. It is ironic that historically we went from a huge consolidation of 117,000 school districts down to 13,500 districts and now we are talking about going through a whole new cycle of splitting the authority apart into a large number of these independent charter schools or maybe more deconsolidation.

Senator Denis:

Do smaller districts or sub-districts give parents more options and choices, or does it take away some of those opportunities? Unless we deal with a situation where, for example, a parent wants to send their child to a school in a different Instructional Precinct, it seems like there will still be issues, even with the smaller size. If the question is about local control and local decisions, it could get very convoluted and parents would be frustrated. Is that an issue we need to deal with?

Mr. Griffith:

Yes, but if you do it right, you could create a system that provides greater local input and all the services a student at CCSD has now. They could still have those services at the magnet schools and for high need special education kids. There could still be services for career and technical education and other specialty schools. At the local schools, the parents would have greater input. You could do both. It just takes time and there needs to be clarity. You have time to do this and roll it out, and potentially it could be all positive.

You have heard the examples of what not to do and that helps. You know you need time to plan this out. You know you need to really think about making it as clear as possible what it is you expect from an Instructional Precinct—what it does, what it does not do and what shared services it has with other precincts or with the overriding Clark County School District. Those decisions need to be as clear as possible. That is the best thing you could do. If you do it right, you could see where parents have some local control within their precinct and still have all the services that are now provided by CCSD. If you do it wrong, you could have a double negative, where parents do not have as much control as they want, plus now you have created a convoluted system that might cut off choices to certain kids.

Senator Denis:

Whenever we talk about education, some people want things to be done very quickly. But it sounds like we should move cautiously because if we do it wrong, we would have to start over again. In the meantime, our kids are the ones who would suffer.

Senator Becky Harris (Senatorial District No. 9):

Many parents are frustrated and feel they do not have enough input with their schools and school district. You said other states have provided more input from parents on curriculum and course offerings. When you look at the way our Nevada system is set up, with elementary schools feeding into middle schools and then high schools, has there been any impact with parents wanting to tailor their child's school curriculum and other issues? Will we run into problems at those secondary schools if we have four feeder elementary schools with four different nuances to their curriculums? Would it even matter?

Mr. Griffith:

I have seen some examples at other school districts that allowed for greater autonomy at the school level. There is a difficulty moving through a system if students in different elementary schools have different curriculums, then junior highs have different curriculums and then the high schools have their own differing curriculums. You want local decisions, but it has to link up.

Seattle Public Schools ran into trouble when they started giving local control to high schools. When a student moved from one high school to the next, they ran into problems with course offerings not lining up. Some high schools did a five-course day and some did a six- or seven-course day. As students moved through the system, it was hard to for them to connect. Some even had trouble meeting graduation requirements.

The mobility rate within CCSD is higher than the national average and higher than many of the larger school districts. This is something to think about when designing your precinct system. Maybe the answer is to allow parents to have input on certain curriculum changes, but keep the rest standard and consistent throughout the District. For example, math course offerings that every student has to take should be kept

standard. They might be offered differently, but standardization is important so when students move from school to school and from precinct to precinct, there is consistency. Complete freedom given to the schools or precincts could cause these kinds of problems and we have seen this in some school districts.

Senator Harris:

We have a critical teacher shortage in Nevada. You mentioned the concept of bonuses for attracting experienced teachers to various schools. As we move through this process, my concern is that we do not drain teachers from some of our vulnerable and at-risk populations. What types of incentives have you seen working? I have teacher friends, and they are not in it for the money. Certainly, teachers should be paid what they are worth, feel valued and have good morale so they are excited to come to work, but what else works as incentives to get the more senior teachers into these at-risk schools? Teachers still need a choice of where they want to teach. We cannot require them to teach in certain locations. There has to be some independent buy-in from the teacher who feels he or she is giving something valuable to a school.

Mr. Griffith:

My dad was a teacher who taught because he loved teaching. One of the first things to do, regardless of deconsolidation, is to ensure that each one of your schools gets a fair distribution of nonteaching resources. This is one of the lead complaints we hear—the schools with younger, less experienced teachers also get shorted on all the other things like janitorial services and textbooks. Make sure you have an equitable system for distributing these nonteaching resources to all your schools.

Go the next step and give schools with a high population of at-risk students the additional resources they need to teach those kids. If you have a high percentage of less experienced teachers at a particular school, put a teacher trainer or mentor teacher there to provide support for these new teachers. You can support teachers working in the at-risk schools by providing them with more services to support them in teaching those kids. You can also pay attention to the student-teacher ratio and make sure the right mix is facilitated in classrooms.

You can also look at providing additional pay or additional services. Interview your teachers when they leave and ask them why they are leaving. I worked with a group of teachers and principals in New York City and they found there was one school with a tremendous outflow of teachers who only lasted at that school an average of 2 years. The District thought it was pay, so they increased the pay for those teachers. There was no change in turnover. They finally did an exit survey and learned the main complaint from exiting teachers was that there was no secure place for them to park their cars. Vehicles were broken into almost every week. So the school put up a fence and a security guard in the parking lot and it helped slow the exodus.

Start doing school-level surveys and exit exams asking teachers why they are leaving. You may find out that for many it is pay. But maybe it is something else that you could turn around fairly quickly.

We see this nationally with fewer people going into the teaching profession. We call it the pipeline—fewer people going into the education pipeline, fewer graduating with education degrees from college and fewer education graduates going into teaching. We do not know if this is a national issue because of the economy and people are going into other professions as the economy is picking up, or if it is because teachers are maligned so much in the public eye. Maybe it is because Millennials are just a different generation who need to be recruited differently. Research is going on now, but there are no solid answers.

Senator Harris:

My concern is not to exacerbate the problems we already have.

Assemblyman Stephen H. Silberkraus (Assembly District No. 29):

You said you recommended the population model for breaking dividing into precincts. Have you seen other places in the country where they have done a hybrid of that? For example, using geographically isolated location as a precinct, but then a more population-based system for the urban core. Has that happened?

Mr. Griffith:

There are not a lot of examples—LAUSD, Miami-Dade County Public Schools and Pinellas County Schools in Tampa and St. Petersburg, Florida are the three. This usually happens in county-wide districts with one large urban area and a surrounding county to cover. The Florida counties have not done a lot of hybridization in their divisions. The LAUSD keeps swinging back and forth from population to geography. It is difficult, because CCSD is very large in both geography and population, and the inner precincts in the Las Vegas area are going to be significantly smaller and have different needs than the outlying precincts which will be much larger physically.

You will never get to a perfect, equal distribution of population. It just cannot work. The more you can make sure it is as close in population and as close ethnically, racially and economically as you can possibly get it, the better off you will be. My guess is, once you create these Instructional Precincts, they will be locked in stone, so I would do some work with a demographer to see how the precincts will look in 10 years. Even if you divide the precincts evenly today, within 10 years, they might look completely different. It looks like the core area of the district is nearly built up, but the outside areas are growing at a pretty good clip, so making sure the population growth projections are known is important.

Senator Hardy:

I represent a rural area of about 45,000 residents with committed parent involvement. Has anyone done the rural justification to allow a school district to include that population? I also represent the City of Henderson with almost 300,000 residents and 45,000 students. So in my Senatorial District, I represent a disparate population base if I were going to make precincts based on population. I would not divide 318,000 by 7 and say that is what your precinct is. So in my mind I am saying, can I get a rural precinct and a urban precinct even though the rural site does not have enough students to meet that 30,000 to 80,000 recommended size for a district?

Mr. Griffith:

It would be very difficult. Any way you divide your district, it will be hard to keep each community together, just like it will be hard to keep each one of your small cities in Clark County together. If population is your main criteria in dividing, you might have a mix, with your part of the county split into two different precincts.

If you moved to 10-12 precincts, you could create subunits that were smaller, but then the question becomes, are there schools in that area to serve those Instructional Precincts? As you get smaller and smaller, there might not be sufficient schools to serve the kids within those precincts. You can use a technique called tuitioning out to make this feasible—if a student lives in Precinct 1, he or she can tuition out to attend school in Precinct 2 because it is closer. The question is, how small do you want to make the precincts? Smaller precincts may keep certain populations together, but it will be difficult to make each precinct the same size and ensure they all have sufficient schools to serve the students.

Senator Hardy:

Is there an unwritten rule somewhere that says that if you divide by population the precincts have to be all the same size? Could one have 40,000 students, another have 80,000 and another have 120,000?

Mr. Griffith:

There is no rule against that, but there is a public perception issue. If you break apart or deconsolidate a school district, and one of your precincts has 90,000 students and one has 20,000, people in the large precinct will say it is not fair that they still have a large precinct and they are not as much in touch with schools and administrators as the smaller precincts. Nothing says you cannot populate the precincts that way, but you should aim for something between 30,000 and 50,000 students per precinct. Remember, though, that you have a growing school district, so things will change.

Senator Ford:

When I hear you talk about the difficulty of creating precincts in the midst of our ever changing population growth and demographics, it strikes me that there is more than one way to create opportunities for more parental control. Maybe this plan is not the right

idea. Maybe we should instead look at opportunities to improve and increase parental involvement and accountability to elected school board members instead of breaking up the CCSD. I am not averse to breaking up the District, but I am not a proponent of it either. As we continue to have this discussion, our Committee should also be considering alternatives to get us where we want to be—to improve student achievement, ensure equity and facilitate efficiencies in our school district. It does not necessarily have to come about by breaking up the CCSD.

Chair Roberson:

I misspoke earlier about the three goals laid out by the sponsors of A.B. 394. They are: to improve the responsiveness of the school district to local needs, to improve achievement and improve efficiency of the school district. I am hearing loud and clear that we need a school district that will be more responsive to local needs.

I will open Agenda Item VII, a presentation from the Guinn Center for Policy Priorities.

Victoria Carreón (Director of Education Policy, Guinn Center for Policy Priorities):

The first thing we think should be addressed is how to create some community-based communication for this Committee. Although there is public comment at meetings, we recommend you use a more systematic process to gather community input by meeting with community stakeholders and conducting regular community input sessions, focus groups and surveys. The Technical Advisory Committee to Develop a Plan to Reorganize the Clark County School District would be a proper forum for that process.

We have discussed the subject of demographic and educational equity in the CCSD. We do have maps on our website that illustrate the current situation in the District. The address for the website is in my presentation ([Exhibit F](#)). There are many inequities, with large concentrations of minority populations correlated with low academic performance in certain areas of Clark County. Those areas also have the least experienced teachers and the highest populations of low income, ELL and minority students. This reorganization process provides us with an opportunity to take a fresh look at CCSD and see how we can fix it by creating Instructional Precincts that will minimize the inequities we already have.

One example of a type of deconsolidation we looked at is in the Jefferson County Public Schools (JCPS) district in Louisville, Kentucky. The JCPS was not broken up, but because of segregation issues, attendance clusters were developed. The JCPS brought in The Civil Rights Project at UCLA to help develop clusters of schools. Within those clusters, the UCLA group looked at demographic factors including the racial and socioeconomic status of the communities to create schools that would be reasonably equal to each other. Within each cluster, parents have the option of choosing the school they want their child to attend. It is a controlled choice mechanism, supported by the federal government.

In trying to reach demographic equity, there will be a trade-off with the size of the Instructional Precinct and ensuring diversity within that Precinct. You can create robust systems of school choice within the precincts so parents feel they have choices. This includes magnet schools, charter schools, select schools, special curriculums and programs that partner with the colleges and universities. A large variety of choices within the precincts will help establish the demographic equity you seek.

When we look at funding equity, we recommend analyzing the current costs of each school in detail. The General Fund and all the categorical funds need to be examined. A One-Star school may appear to receive a lot of money per pupil, but that is counting the categorical money. If you just look at the General Fund money, you will see those One-Star schools often have less of that funding source in their school because teachers are less experienced and have lower salaries. It is important to see that data in detail to understand what the school is really spending.

It is also important to look at how our basic support guarantee works in Nevada. We know that CCSD has \$5,512 per student basic support guarantee, which is a combination of State and local funding. Other monies going into the General Fund for education are from local tax revenues, which average \$1,000 per student. If monies are going to be divided among precincts, it is important to take those numbers into account. The tax money, which is largely from property taxes, does vary county-wide, with the biggest concentration of funds coming from the Las Vegas Strip.

Another thing to consider with funding equity is how much of the basic support guarantee would go to CCSD versus the Instructional Precincts. Would you take a set amount off the top, or would each precinct pay out of their allotted funds? In our report ([Exhibit G](#)) we have outlined criteria for deciding what CCSD should pay for versus what the Instructional Precincts should pay for under the basic support guarantee. There are more issues to consider besides economies of scale, such as asking if the function has a centralized infrastructure which would be difficult to divide. Is it something that is administrative by nature, or could it be performed more effectively on the precinct level? We suggest you look at criteria and define which are important for determining how to divide the financial responsibilities between the CCSD and the Instructional Precincts.

To figure out how to deal with Title I and categorical funding, it is important to determine who is the local educational agency. This makes a big difference in how the federal government determines what your allocation is. If each Instructional Precinct is its own educational agency, the amount of Title I that precinct would receive would be different. We also have the possible reauthorization of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act that is worth monitoring.

Education facilities benefit from keeping control centralized, but when we looked at the Jordan School District's (JSD) division into two school districts in 2009, they divided the assets and past debt based on assessed valuations. The JSD had 40 percent of the

assessed valuation while the new Canyon School District had 60 percent valuation. Those districts kept paying the past debt based on those valuations. However, they made decisions which made things difficult. For example, they said if a school facility building was in a school district's boundaries, it was theirs. This meant many administrative facilities were in one district and not the other. That other district then had to build its own administrative facilities at its own expense.

If things remain centralized, it is important to discuss what kind of decision process will ensure that each precinct gets an adequate amount of both capital and maintenance funding. We suggest having a governing body made up of precincts to help with those decisions, using criteria that helps hone in on smart decisions.

Regarding governance, we recommend looking at districts where the county-wide district, like CCSD, could serve as an oversight agency to ensure accountability at the precinct level. This way, you could ensure standards are being met, that there is a high level of quality in each precinct and that finances are managed and operations are being run well. This is how it is done in California with county offices of education having some level of oversight over the school districts.

Charter schools are worth looking at to see what kind of models they use for governance. We have talked about charter schools being their own school districts. In Nevada there are charter schools with multiple campuses and schools. The charter school governance would be interesting to look at because you have that school-based decision making option and a local board in place that is similar to what is being proposed with the Instructional Precinct Advisory Councils. Charter schools also define the individuals they want on their boards to give more rounded input to the school. It is also important to consider including training for these governing boards as some states already require.

Creating a timeline is something that will help. Be sure to include community input in the process. Once the precinct criteria is defined, it would be helpful to begin modeling different geographic scenarios. Remember the goals of A.B. 394 are improving responsiveness, increasing student achievement and reducing costs. It was interesting to hear Mr. Griffith say that in the examples of other districts' previous deconsolidations, none of the goals included improving academic achievement. In Nevada's process, we have an opportunity to approach it differently.

Assemblywoman Neal: Can you explain the attendance clusters? What is the difference between the current process under the CCSD Attendance Zone Advisory Commission (AZAC), where they list a criteria to ensure school preference for factors including proximity, opportunity, for siblings to attend the same school, stability of the educational program and attendance boundary, etc.?

Ms. Carreón: The attendance cluster is a series of schools. It is a much larger area. In Louisville, for example, they take demographic factors into account to create the attendance cluster. Within that cluster, students can attend any school of their choosing. The transportation system within the cluster was designed to be efficient so students could readily get transportation to any of the schools. The idea was to make the cluster geographically compact as well as racially and socioeconomically diverse.

Assemblywoman Neal: About 5 or 6 years ago, they put in a school choice option where parents could decide to put their children in other schools in their neighborhood rather than the closest school they were zoned for. How is that different from the current feeder pattern?

Ms. Carreón: There is an open school choice option in Clark County, so students can attend the school of their choice if there are seats available. Only certain schools include transportation provided by the District, such as magnet schools within certain zones. That is the key difference. You can choose the school, but you will not always have transportation provided. Attendance clusters are designed to provide transportation for students for any schools within their boundaries.

Chair Roberson: I will open Item VIII about improving the teacher pipeline to employment. I asked for this to be added so we can discuss the serious shortage of classroom teachers in Clark County.

Judi Steele (President and CEO, Public Education Foundation):

At the Public Education Foundation, we invest in ideas and evaluate ways our children can be better educated. We have had an opportunity to speak to national leaders who also talk about the teacher pipeline and the shortage. Realistically, we will not attract topflight teachers to Nevada unless we try new ideas instead of the status quo. We believe teachers should have better pay, but this alone will not solve the problem.

We do have some suggestions, starting with how to recruit more college students. Not enough students are choosing to go into the teaching profession. I recently saw an online opinion piece on why students do not want to be teachers. The writer, a college recruiter for education majors, said there are plenty of young people ready to serve as teachers. They want to make a difference, he said. These young people are actively mentoring youth in underserved neighborhoods, starting nonprofits and are interested in addressing social needs. Interestingly, these college students do not want to pursue teaching. Why? Many of those young people do not think they can make a difference because they think teachers mostly read from scripts and administer tests. The writer said young professionals want to be agents of change and many would gladly join a teaching profession that demanded creativity, autonomy and initiative.

The key lies in creating a system that continues to create space and appreciate teachers and administrators who are taking the initiative and being more entrepreneurial.

We have discussed with the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) the possibility of having an honors college that would look around the country for bright students. Their education degree would focus on problem solving and innovation. We could look to the teachers graduating from this program for solutions.

We have also talked with CCSD about a teacher leadership program to create space within schools and classrooms for teachers to try new ideas. When they work, those successful ideas could be replicated and implemented. This may inspire young people to realize that teaching can be a place where they can solve problems.

We know we have trouble keeping new teachers in the system. We ask them why they leave after only a few years teaching in CCSD. Many say it is because they not feel a sense of community here. We have an opportunity to create a community that welcomes people and connects people who join our workforce.

One idea from the 1970s is to work with the private sector to create housing complexes for people who move to our community. This has been done in other cities—Austin and San Antonio, TX., Los Angeles and Santa Clara, CA.—where they create affordable housing in communities for teachers. This would give teachers a place to be together and share ideas. We could possibly use areas around UNLV since it is a vibrant community with culture in that part of Las Vegas.

We believe we will fill most of the vacant teaching positions from within our own community and neighboring states. If we want people to come here and stay here, they need to have connections here. We have shared some of our ideas with CCSD, including the idea of families with members in the education field being invited in and incentivized to stay. Another idea is taking people from other careers who want a change and making it possible for them to accelerate into a teaching career. Those programs have started.

To assist school administrators in finding, retaining and growing the best teachers, we have brainstormed the idea of looking into the private sector for managers, CEOs and company heads who understand how to deal with customers, run buildings and run a company efficiently. Those people could be in a position to run a building and free up a principal who should be concentrating on instruction and managing teachers and students. This way, the principal could grow and support teachers instead of dealing with building and facilities issues. What if we reimagined schools where the CEO of four or five schools dealt with the business of the school and the instructional leader, the principal, could deal with learning? We think that is worthy of thought and many people

in business have told us they wish they could work with children and put more meaning into their lives.

There is a great potential for the alternative licensure. It would free principals. If you think of a hospital, it is usually run by a CEO who handles the business end, with a medical director handling the medical issues. That is similar to what we could do in education.

We are lucky because we have the time to do this right, to rethink our approach and not just tweak the system. You have the opportunity to take innovative ideas to strengthen learning for boys and girls and to engage parents in a meaningful way. It is critical that we have the goals of student achievement and also engaging families. Some communities need support so they can learn they have the capacity to impact schools.

The challenges facing education today do not have easy fixes. Nevada has gained a global reputation for our innovative gaming industry. Over the past few years we are beginning to see the results of creative and innovative thinking as we begin to see the diversity of our economic base. New industries are coming to Nevada. We can reimagine a great public education system for southern Nevada. We cannot be afraid of failure as we plan this deconsolidation. How many research and development departments have created products only after a failure? We must work together to allow ourselves to try and fail and try and win. We can strengthen our teacher and leadership pipeline, which holds the key to strengthening what we do in schools. No matter how you structure or reorganize a system, if you do not have human resources with the capacity to work with our children and our families, it will make no difference.

Senator Ford:

I am a former member of your foundation and am a former educator. I admit I left education because I needed more money. Is there any research on a salary number that would encourage people to go into teaching?

Ms. Steele:

That is not my area of expertise, but we do know great teachers can be incentivized to stay in teaching with certain models. If you found a great teacher and offered them additional dollars to work with more students, that is something that is working around the country. You could also create a master teacher who earns more money for taking on more students.

Senator Ford:

That is helpful, and something we should consider, but we should also consider learning what the magic salary number might be to entice people into a teaching career.

Chair Roberson:

Thank you for the presentation and for all the great work you do at the Public Education Foundation. I will now open Item IX, a report from the CCSD Human Resources Department and its effort to hire and recruit teachers.

Staci Vesneske (Chief Human Resources Officer, Clark County School District):

It is important that we have an ongoing dialogue and collaboration as we discuss this true teacher shortage crisis. My presentation ([Exhibit H](#)) illustrates what a concerted effort it is to fill our staffing vacancies here. We all work together.

Nevada is tied with Alaska at 0.17 percent for the fewest teachers produced per student. This is important because some might say we only produced 771 teachers in 2012-2013, but we are a small state. However, when you look at the teacher production per public school student, you can see the ratio is very low. Equally alarming is the fact that the teacher production ratio in neighboring California, our largest supplier of teacher candidates, is also low at 0.18 percent. This is a national problem, and concerning to us because the percentages of teachers produced are also low in Washington and Oregon, other typical sources we go to for teachers.

Even states with around the same amount of students as we have in Nevada, have higher teacher production ratios than Nevada. New Hampshire, with many fewer students, produces many more teachers per student than we do: 0.57 percent. Still, overall teacher production in the U.S. is continuing to decline. California has seen a 55 percent drop in teacher preparation program enrollment from 2008 to 2012. That large of a drop in a big state like California truly impacts the number of teachers that all the states are competing for. Nationally, the drop in teacher production has been around 30 percent, still alarming.

Senator Ford asked what the magic salary number is for people to want to become teachers, and my answer is more than anyone else. When you look at the tech industry where there is supply and demand, there can be a company that will pay more for a program or a graphic designer. That money is paid through increased profits. Schools are not in the business of making a profit, so that makes it more difficult. Not only is the supply and demand of teachers and the dropping interest in the teaching profession alarming, many students who enter college with the intention of becoming a teacher change majors because other careers pay better.

Nationally, there are not enough quality teachers willing to teach in urban and rural schools serving low-income students or students of color. Nevada is mostly rural with two urban areas. We serve many low-income students and students of color. These factors contribute to our teacher shortage.

Right now we need an additional 2,950 teachers in the CCSD. Resignations and retirements accounted for the loss of 1,730 teachers last year.

The largest percentages of our teacher vacancies are in schools with lower Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) ratings. There are several in the Three-Star school category, but that is a function of the number of schools in that area.

We are concerned that the bulk of our vacancies are in schools serving our highest need students. The vacancies in the highest need schools are at 52.8 percent. Adding in the Tier 2 schools vacancy percentage at 20.5 percent, you can see that more than 70 percent of our teacher vacancies are in these schools.

We also look at data on our attrition rate, which includes retirees as well as teachers leaving CCSD or the profession. Our overall attrition rate is below the national average, which is more than 15 percent and up to 20 percent in the urban areas, but any time we lose an experienced teacher we need to be concerned. When we are projecting to lose 1,700 teachers in a year to attrition, remember that we begin with more than 18,000 teachers.

We track new hires first-year attrition rates by various pipelines. The term pipeline refers to a teacher's path to initial licensure. The CCSD Alternative Routes to Licensure (ARL) Program includes people recruited for teaching who achieve licensure. Once those teachers get initial licensure, he or she goes on to higher education institutions like UNLV.

Chair Roberson:

Can you explain the ARL program?

Ms. Vesneske:

Through Nevada law, someone with at least a Bachelor's degree in a major other than education is able to become a licensed teacher through a State-approved program either at CCSD or at a college or university. There are a wide variety of programs. We are excited about Western Governors University, an online school, coming to the Las Vegas area, offering teaching programs from licensure to Master's degrees. All the ARL programs offer initial professional development, an internship or practicum in the classroom, and then the issuance of a conditional license. During the next 3 years after receiving that license, additional coursework is required for the licensee to earn their standard teaching license.

There is some conflicting data since 2012 about whether ARL teachers leave at a higher or a lower rate than non-ARL teachers. This chart shows how many teachers continue to the second year of teaching after their first year. This data includes new teachers and experienced teachers. The attrition rate for CCSD ARL teachers has gone down slightly since 2012.

As Judi Steele mentioned, we saw a need to have our first year teachers connected to the community, so we initiated social meetups for these teachers. We feel this might be

helping our CCSD attrition rate decline while the total ARL attrition rate increased slightly. We think this may be due to the newness of some of the ARL programs.

Assemblywoman Neal:

Are the new ARL teachers going to the at-risk schools? Ultimately, those are the most challenging schools and those teachers would have the least amount of skills to handle those children. It seems like the chances of a teacher leaving or going to a less challenging school would probably happen after his or her first year at an at-risk school. You would not feel like you had the skills to handle the multiple challenges at an at-risk school. Is that part of the reason for the attrition rate among first year teachers?

Ms. Vesneske:

That is certainly one of the many complex factors for this attrition. Our vacancies are in our highest risk schools and we have a teacher shortage, so there is a higher ARL teacher population at those schools. That is a national trend. Our first year teacher attrition rate is around 10 percent, which is below or about the national average, depending on which study you reference.

Our experienced teachers leave at a much higher rate after their first year. We are digging into the data to figure out why this is happening. We think it might be that we provide a lot of support to brand new teachers, more so than we provide to experienced teachers that come here from other teaching jobs.

Assemblywoman Neal:

Have you considered that incentives should go to teachers with more than 5 years of experience? Those teachers would be better equipped to handle the at-risk students versus giving a \$5,000 signing bonus to a brand new teacher who is limited in their skills and will become frustrated.

Ms. Vesneske:

You are referring to the provisions of Senate Bill (S.B.) 511.

SENATE BILL 511: Establishes the Teach Nevada Scholarship Program and incentives for new teachers in certain schools. (BDR 34-1277)

We are limited to what that bill's provisions are. What you are talking about is something we are looking into as a school district, though. The Legislature could look at this issue too, to determine if the incentives should go to just the new teachers or to all teachers to retain the highly effective individuals in the at-risk schools. We do try to place student teaching and ARL candidates in our schools with the most vacancies because research shows that if a student does his or her student teaching in a certain school, they are more likely to take a job at that school.

Senator Harris:

About your graph on page 14 ([Exhibit H](#)), the burgundy attrition rate is referencing traditional teachers, correct?

Ms. Vesneske:

Yes, traditional route teachers.

Senator Harris:

It is interesting that the attrition rate for ARL teachers is lower than for those teachers who go the traditional route. What accounts for that?

Ms. Vesneske:

I cannot give you a definitive answer, only theories. One theory is the connection idea, where a teacher grows up or feels connected, he or she tends to stay there. Most of our ARL candidates earned their bachelor's degrees locally and their families are here, so they have that sense of community. Other candidates we hire from other states may choose to leave at a higher rate than those ARL teachers because of the lack of connection.

The second theory is that because of the ARL program, we are required to provide 3 years of ongoing seminar support to those candidates, so those teachers are getting additional support.

Assemblywoman Diaz:

Are we giving exit surveys to our teachers as they leave? It would be nice to have concrete data instead of theories on this.

Ms. Vesneske:

We get exit information in two ways. We ask for a reason when a teacher resigns. Many give no reason. For first year teachers, we do not have the capacity to do one-on-one interviews, but we have an online exit survey. That survey also goes to that teacher's principal. Sometimes people leave simply because teaching was ultimately not a match for them, but of the ones where the principal says he or she really wanted to keep that candidate, the main reasons for leaving are usually classroom management and the inability to work with higher risk kids and family reasons.

This spring, we are launching a survey that would go to every teacher who leaves the District or transfers within it. We want to be able to identify best practices at those schools that retain teachers at a higher level.

We have data from last year's survey given to every teacher who leaves CCSD employment. About one-third of them give no reason, there are also some who are not offered a contract, others who move away and the most are retirees. We track this every year and it is pretty consistent.

Since August, the start of the contract year, we have hired nearly 300 teachers with a total of 1,920 for the 2015-2016 school year. We hire every week as people complete their student teaching, candidates move to the area with a spouse who has employment in town, and as our ARL candidates become eligible for initial licensure. We expect to hire another 100 to 200 teachers by March.

We also track where our teacher pipeline is coming from. About one quarter of the hires are new teachers. This year we had a bump in experienced teachers coming here, something we attribute to our national recruiting campaign. We also had a bump in CCSD substitutes, which we believe has to do with our targeted internal recruiting campaign where we encourage substitute teachers with at least a bachelor's degree to join our ARL program.

Where are our teachers coming from? A few years ago, we recognized the national teacher shortage was coming, especially at the elementary school level, so we ramped up our ARL elementary program. Two-thirds of the teacher hires come from other colleges and universities or ARL programs. The CCSD ARL program produces 13.8 percent of our teachers, up from an initial 5 percent when the program started. The local university, UNLV, has instituted their own ARL program which recruits teachers into their program separate from their own education degrees. Teach for America (TFA) students are technically completing their ARL through UNLV, but TFA has their own initial licensure. Our contract with TFA allows us to pay them for 175 teachers, although only about 80 went through the program this year.

Chair Roberson:

You have the ability to hire up to 175 teachers through that program, but you have only hired 80, correct?

Ms. Vesneske:

Yes, that is correct.

Chair Roberson:

What are there not more TFA teachers in the CCSD classrooms?

Ms. Vesneske:

Teach For America would have to answer that. We have a contract with them that states up to 175 teachers are what we can pay for. Some of it is probably the national recruitment issue, which has been well documented. Also, TFA relies on philanthropy to fund their training program and I believe their philanthropy numbers have gone down.

Chair Roberson:

It sounds like you have the funding to pay for those teachers, is that correct?

Ms. Vesneske:

Yes, CCSD has the money to pay for our portion of the training.

Chair Roberson:

What portion is that?

Ms. Vesneske:

We pay for about 10 percent, which comes to \$4,000 per teacher for 2 years of training. Their training costs around \$40,000 per student.

Chair Roberson:

It sounds like TFA does not have funding to provide more teachers this year.

Ms. Vesneske:

They would have to speak to it, but that's my impression.

So what are we doing to recruit teachers? We launched a Calling All Heroes national campaign and increased our CCSD ARL production, which more than doubled our teacher production over prior school year. We streamlined our application process, which is online and allows candidates to check on their progress at any time. As soon as a candidate hits "submit" in the application process, he or she gets an automatic email response thanking them for applying. It will tell the applicant if anything is missing from his or her application. When we get the names of applicants and identify the work history, we can then verify the candidate is a licensable teacher and refer that person out to principals. This year, the candidates were completing the application process and we were doing the vetting after a principal had already interviewed and selected the person.

Senator Hardy:

How long does it usually take a teacher to be hired? I know a teacher who got another job before CCSD got back to her.

Ms. Vesneske:

When we hear this, we like to investigate what exactly happened with that candidate. There are a variety of things that could happen. It could be we were waiting for the candidate's references. We brought in temporary workers this past year to call references that were not returned electronically. The candidate can go online and see if that is a holdup. Sometimes the candidate has some background or disclosure issues we need to investigate. We get 26,000 applications every year for all our positions. We do follow up and can determine what the problem is if the applicant contacts us.

Senator Hardy:

Of those 26,000 applicants, how many are hired?

Ms. Vesneske:

That number is applications for positions within the whole CCSD, not just teaching. Last year, we hired 6,000 individuals, 2,000 of them teachers.

Senator Hardy:

Is that because someone offered more money than CCSD?

Ms. Vesneske:

We have seen a decline in the number of applications for some positions since the casinos started hiring again. We are then competing for non-college degree holders. There was an application process that required an interview of every candidate. Principals did not find that useful. We further streamlined that application process to eliminate the required interview.

We advertised the signing bonus from S.B. 511, which was passed late in the 2015 Legislative Session. We believe it has lowered the percentage of vacancies in high need schools. We usually run between 78 percent and 84 percent of vacancies in those at-risk schools, but we are now at around 70 percent. We believe this will have even more of an impact next year when we can begin advertising the incentives.

Chair Roberson:

Are you saying that 70 percent of the teacher vacancies district-wide are in the at-risk schools?

Ms. Vesneske:

Yes, but it was higher before. We do believe we are having an impact on where people are choosing to be hired.

We had 260 more hires over last year, a 16 percent increase. We also hired 200 more teachers with experience, a 52 percent increase. That is important because when our hires come to us with experience, they do not experience the new teacher learning curve. We think this increase could have come from our national Calling All Heroes campaign as we had several teachers come from other states.

We increased our early hires by 50 percent. Those teachers are hired in March, April and May. It is important because research shows that teachers hired earlier in the season are more likely to be successful. They are considered more in demand in other school districts. Thirty-five percent of our new hires categorize themselves as diverse ethnically, which is higher than our current teaching force. The ARL hires are highly diverse, with up to 55 percent identifying themselves as diverse ethnically. By cohort, I am referencing the fact that we offer multiple ARL sessions throughout the school year.

I am not minimizing the 800 vacancies we have. We take this very seriously and know we need a licensed teacher in every classroom. We talk about it all the time with my

staff and with colleges and universities. We know there is a national shortage and that Nevada's pipeline is the lowest in the nation. We track our successes and use them as metrics going into the year. The best metric we have is how many teachers did we hire and did we fill the vacancies. There are also metrics for the quality of teachers we have hired.

Senator Ford:

Seriously, what is the right number of salary dollars to entice a teacher to come here instead of somewhere else?

Ms. Vesneske:

We talk about the magic 40, or \$40,000 per year. There are so many factors that go into hiring a teacher, from community connections to the culture of the school or district. When we just look at competition, who are we competing against with a similar cost of living? It is in the \$40,000 or higher range. We need to get to that. We are at less than \$35,000 now.

Senator Ford:

Looking at the statistics about the vacancies being mostly in the at-risk schools. What is the process of filling the vacancies? Why are the more experienced teachers not going here? Does the CCSD have any authority to tell a teacher he or she is going to a certain school? Is it up to the principal? How does it work?

Ms. Vesneske:

You hit on all the factors. The District does not have the ability to unilaterally move teachers from one school to another, unless it is a turnaround school. I am not a legal expert, but that is how I interpret the laws pertaining to CCSD. New teachers are allowed to choose where they want to teach. That has been controversial because some say a new teacher should be willing to go anywhere.

A few years ago, we had consultants from The New Teacher Project (TNTP) who received a grant to provide us with additional teachers. One thing they talked about was that we cannot be competitive if we tell teachers they have to go somewhere. The research says it has to be a match between the teacher and the school and school population for the teacher to be successful. Secondly, if you force a teacher to teach somewhere against their wishes, that teacher can just go teach in another district where teachers are not told where to teach. We do not want to lose candidates. As it is now, the candidate can interview with a variety of schools and choose the school he or she wants to teach at. There are also no current financial incentives to teach at an at-risk school beyond S.B. 511 dollars.

Senator Ford:

Do you know how much money is needed by CCSD to raise the starting salary to \$40,000 and commensurately increase other teachers' salaries?

Ms. Vesneske:

I would need to defer to our CFO to get that figure.

Chair Roberson:

Those individuals are here today and can probably answer that question later. How does S.B. 511 work in your recruiting efforts to date?

Ms. Vesneske:

Approximately 1,100 individuals have currently received the bonus from that Legislation. If I am at a career fair vying for teachers and someone next to me is offering a \$38,000 starting salary and we are only offering \$34,000, the fact that we can tell the person he or she will get \$5,000 extra by signing with us before August, does help. We will be doing a survey to ask new hires why they chose us. The fact that we are in lowering our vacancies to 70 percent indicates to me that we are successful.

Chair Roberson:

This bill was just passed a few months ago. When were you first able to offer this signing bonus to recruits?

Ms. Vesneske:

As soon as it was passed, we secretly told them. We had to wait until July to formally put it into documentation.

Chair Roberson:

Since that time, you have identified 1,100 recruits?

Ms. Vesneske:

That number reflects people hired before S.B. 511 because those hires were eligible to receive the bonus. We do lose people between signing a contract in May and when they should start work in August. They can choose to not show up. We try to cultivate them to come. We do not yet know if that Legislation has minimized that summer dropout number.

Chair Roberson:

In your year-round recruiting, are you seeing more people who want to teach here in Clark County but not necessarily at an at-risk school because of the \$5,000 signing bonus money?

Ms. Vesneske:

I would need to check with my recruiters. I could get you that information.

Chair Roberson:

We do want to see if this Legislation is working or not working; that is important.

Assemblyman Stewart:

I have talked to teachers who just missed the bonus. They have been teaching for a year longer than the ones who got the bonus and they are getting paid less even though they have more experience and seniority.

Ms. Vesneske:

I do want to emphasize the importance of the increased diversity of our new hires. National data suggests that our ARL hires include a more diverse group of teachers who are more representative of our student population. That is one reason we continue to expand our ARL teachers.

We have hired the most teachers in the western U.S. excluding Texas, and more teachers than the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). We have hired a similar amount to Houston Independent School District, where the starting salary is \$51,500. Clark County School District's starting salary is \$34,463. Houston does not have the same amount of vacancies we have, but their starting pay is \$51,500.

Chair Roberson:

What is the vacancy rate in Houston?

Ms. Vesneske:

We were unable to get that figure. As of August, they had about 200-300 yet to hire.

Chair Roberson:

I cannot believe that information is not publically available. We should try harder to get it.

Ms. Vesneske:

We will call and get the information for you.

Our current method of recruiting is to look at what candidates are out there and who can we get noticed by in social media or advertising. From there, we get our leads, at the top of that inverted triangle on page 23 ([Exhibit H](#)). That represents recruiters or staff following up with candidates. We call candidates who start an application and do not complete it. We offer assistance. We have a three-touch rule for recruiters—once there is a prospective teacher, the recruiter has to call and engage the person at least three times.

We have a three-touch rule for travel, also—we tell recruiters not to limit themselves by only going to a career fair, but add in two colleges to see who might want to come for our ARL program. We have increased our access to potential applicants through social media, online professional networks like LinkedIn and the advertising you have seen at McCarran International Airport in Las Vegas. We are following up on leads we get through all these venues, trying to build relationships with applicants. This funnel has

helped us to more clearly identify staff roles on how to recruit. We also brought in temporary workers to help with the process.

We are also trying to identify what it is that Millennials, born between 1981 and 1997, want in terms of their employment with CCSD. We do target that age group because it tends to be the group that stays and are able to be hired. We know that recruiting internally is important. Recent research shows that less than 1 percent of individuals who begin teaching choose to move to another state. It is difficult to recruit from other states, so we know we must build our own funnel.

Senator Ford:

On your recruitment applications from other states, is it true that you have to come here to apply, or can it be done online?

Ms. Vesneske:

You can absolutely apply online. If you are at a college or university, you can submit your resume and we will upload it so a principal will be available when you complete your application. We do the reference checking and vetting upon hire.

Senator Ford:

Is that a new development? I have heard anecdotally that people cannot apply online and instead must come here to apply.

Ms. Vesneske:

That has not been true for several years. In fact, I believe the CCSD made the cover of Newsweek way back when because we were one of the only school districts with online application availability. We have changed our online application to provide more specific information to principals.

Page 24 ([Exhibit H](#)) is an example of one of our recruiter's effort. These four recruiters travel three weeks every month throughout the U.S. Camille, the recruiter depicted in this illustration, was our first recruiter and has been very successful. She has contacted a total of 9,881 candidates and hired 316, with 155 still in the application system.

Chair Roberson:

Can you tell the Committee about your resources in the CCSD Human Resources Department? Who do you have working for you as recruiters? How many are there and what is the size of your staff? Is it enough? What resources are you needing to fill these teacher vacancies?

Ms. Vesneske:

In the past 5 years, our department has decreased significantly due to budget cuts. All the central offices of CCSD were cut by 20 percent. Our cost per hire is about \$1,200, which includes advertising, salaries, travel, etc. That is \$11 million divided by the 4,000

full-time hires we made. We hired part-time, substitutes and temporary workers, also, which would bring the total to 6,000 hires.

Chair Roberson:

You are not including substitute teachers in these numbers, are you?

Ms. Vesneske:

No, these are full-time, licensed teachers with benefits.

Chair Roberson:

How many people do you supervise in your HR department today?

Ms. Vesneske:

There are about 160, but we also oversee transfer compensation and all those individual things.

Chair Roberson:

Of those 160, how many deal with teacher recruitment?

Ms. Vesneske:

We have four full-time recruiters, four people processing teacher applications and three administrators, although I also recruit support staff. We also use pieces of part-time people.

Chair Roberson:

So that is 11 full-time people, right?

Ms. Vesneske:

Yes.

Chair Roberson:

So out of 160 staff in your department, 11 people touch recruiting?

Ms. Vesneske:

Those 11 touch the formal recruiting part. We have recruiting and we have staffing, which are not the same. Staffing includes the human capital management directors who refer applicants to principals. It is not recruiting, more referring.

Chair Roberson:

How many of those individuals are there?

Ms. Vesneske:

There are five, each with teams of about five who also deal with other issues including compensation and onboarding and things like that.

Chair Roberson:

Out of 160, if 11 are touching recruiting, what do the other 149 employees do?

Ms. Vesneske:

Many do hand tracking. All of the 6,000 employees we hired need to be on-boarded and put into the system and all their paperwork completed. We have an entire department committed to our ARL training program and first year teachers. We have a small department responsible for data tracking. We have about 15 people who just do leave tracking—people going on family leave or regular leave and coming back and forth. We have an entire department that pays people. We do not oversee payroll, but we have a department with individuals that gather data when a new teacher comes on so we can place them accurately on the salary scale based on their experience, etc. We have staff that does pay for support staff. We have a department responsible for all our substitute teacher coverage, including hiring, tracking and managing. We also do exit tracking.

Chair Roberson:

Do you feel like 11 individuals are enough for recruiting? If you could double it to 22 people tomorrow, would it help? What I am getting at is the fact that this is a crisis. You have acknowledged that it is a crisis. I cannot think of anything more important right now than putting teachers in classrooms, and you are telling me that 11 people out of 160 in your department actually work on this crisis. I am just trying to understand.

Ms. Vesneske:

It goes without saying that if we had more recruiters and could hit more parts of the country, it would make it more likely we would be able to recruit additional teachers to Nevada. We would also make sure they were not just out there recruiting, it is the cultivation. It is all the pieces of the funnel. The more people you have in each step of the funnel, the better you can get the word out, cultivate the candidate and educate them about what it is like to work at CCSD.

Our needs are not just people, we need resources like advertising to bring candidates here and be able to offer an open house where we could fly a candidate here and show them our schools.

Chair Roberson:

What is your budget devoted to recruiting? Is it enough?

Ms. Vesneske:

Our entire Human Resources Department has a \$14 million budget that includes everything. Recruiting is around \$5 million which includes the fees paid to Teach For America and includes recruiting for all positions, not just teachers.

Assemblyman Diaz:

You stated you cannot hit all parts of the country while recruiting. Where has the focus been? What states are we fiercely recruiting and what states are we leaving out?

Ms. Vesneske:

We use the information on the charts on pages 4 and 5 ([Exhibit H](#)) with the ratio of teachers produced in each state to help us target states that traditionally overproduce teachers. New York is one state that produces a lot of candidates. We use the data from the National Council on Teacher Quality to find overproduction candidates, but that data is always changing. We do target surrounding states, especially those with high diversity and bilingual populations. We frankly have a hard time competing with Texas and California and their higher salaries.

Looking forward, we are planning to expand our ARL program and anticipate adding 100 to 200 candidates in the upcoming school year. We already have 100 more candidates than last year, so we should be closer to gaining 200 candidates.

We plan to increase traffic to the ARL program using online access to professional development for out-of-state candidates. This would mean a teacher candidate can do their professional development online where they are and then come to Clark County for their practicum. Our ARL candidates are not guaranteed to be hired so expecting them to come here and live here for several weeks before they get hired is a significant risk on their part.

We also plan to streamline the application process by making it possible to upload resumes. Millennials and others do not want to fill out a bunch of forms. They are used to clicking “yes” on their phone and immediately all the information they need is gathered and sent. All this information—resumes and disclosure questions—would be immediately accessible to principals, easing the application process. We will continue the vetting after the person is hired, but we feel this will speed up the process.

We are also exploring alternative pipelines by looking for staffing companies and asking them to send us teaching candidates. We contracted with Kelly Services, Inc. to get us at least nine candidates, however, we did not get one candidate we could hire. We had the same experience with another staffing company, but we are still looking for staffing companies that may deliver.

We are in conversation with a company that delivers teaching candidates remotely to classrooms. The school district pays a support staff person to monitor the class while the teacher is delivering instruction. We have some high schools excited about this. We are looking into the cost and technical equipment needed for this to see if it is cost effective.

We have several programs to cultivate our current and prospective hires including using teacher leaders who call candidates during the summer to support them, having community roundtables for ideas, putting on job fairs here, and working with out-of-state universities to place their teacher graduates here because we know they are more likely to stay here if they start here.

Senator Ford:

What about applicants who are licensed in other states, could they easily get their State license to teach in Nevada or do they have to come here?

Ms. Vesneske:

I think a paper application is still required, but it may be changing. We could ask the Department of Education (DOE) for the State to see where that stands.

Senator Ford:

Would that be a barrier in being able to recruit?

Ms. Vesneske:

Yes.

Senator Ford:

Can you address reciprocity? How does it work and do we need to change anything?

Ms. Vesneske:

We need true reciprocity. In Nevada, we have what I call “sort of” reciprocity. If you have a specific type of license from a specific type of state, you can come here and teach. If you have a different type of license, you may need additional coursework or testing, even if you have a license to teach in another state.

In a true reciprocity situation, when you came here, you would not be required to take Nevada Constitution, Nevada school law and the U.S. Constitution. There are no other states that I know of requiring individuals to take those courses or tests to be fully licensed.

Because of a study between the states of Washington and Oregon, all states have changed their license over the years. If you have been a teacher for 30 years, there may have been 30 versions of licenses in the State of Washington, for example. If I had any license in Washington, I should be able to type that in to an program at the D.O.E. and that program would tell me if it is acceptable or not, and if not, it should tell me what I need to do to make it work. Currently, the applicant has to call us and talk to an analyst. The program we want will take some time to write and set up, but it would really help streamline the process for applicants.

Chair Roberson:

Governor Sandoval established \$60,000 in fiscal year 2016 to fund a study of the current licensing requirements of educators in Nevada. I believe the DOE is conducting that study. We would like to hear from them on how that study is proceeding. I would expect that study would be completed during this Interim.

Ms. Vesneske:

We take our roles seriously and every week we meet and brainstorm changes and adaptations we can make to bring teachers to Nevada. We have some ideas about what Legislators can do to increase our teacher pipeline. One is to expand TeachNevada, an outstanding program created by S.B. 511. If our current high schoolers become teachers, that is where our future pipeline is and where we should be investing energy. We know those are the people who will start teaching here and who would stay here because their families are here. I am excited about that program. The loan forgiveness program for people who work in Nevada also has huge potential.

We also need to create true reciprocity for teachers coming from any state and also allow provisional licensing for teachers coming in from other states where licensing is different. The Legislature could also eliminate the unique Nevada requirement for the three classes teachers must take: Nevada Constitution, Nevada School Law and U.S. Constitution.

Once a person becomes an ARL teacher with an initial license, he or she is required to take additional coursework. At the elementary level it is a lot of coursework. At the secondary level, it can be more specialized for those teaching specific subjects like math, for example. This additional coursework is a significant cost to an ARL candidate and with our Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF) so broad and focused on teacher development, performance plans and improvement plans, we could tie standard license issuance of an ARL candidate to their performance on the NEPF. We could also tie the license issuance to the performance plans as identified by the teacher and principal, replacing the additional coursework they would have to complete at their expense.

Another thing the Legislature could help us with is to allow residency licenses for those completing ARL internships and coursework. Our candidates have to complete the internship prior to being paid. Some candidates are able to complete the internship while doing a long term substitute job, but they are unable to be in a regularly licensed position.

It would also help if we could institute a fully funded minimum salary requirement that bargaining could not change. Some states have salary schedules for all teachers working in their state. It would also help to tie salary increases to a cost-of-living allowance standard. This would maintain the beginning salaries at a specific level.

I know this is both a political and a bargaining issue, but it would ensure that any bargaining agreement would have a minimum salary requirement for new teachers.

Chair Roberson:

Regarding that study I was talking about earlier, Governor Sandoval recommended \$60,000 in FY16 to study the current licensing requirements for educators in Nevada. Specifically, the DOE indicates the study would entail a comprehensive review of *Nevada Administrative Code*, Chapter 391, established in 1981 by the State Board of Education related to the licensure of educational personnel. According to the DOE, the goal of the study is to obtain recommendations on how to align licensing laws and regulations with the elements of the NEPF to make them more current, cohesive and legally defensible.

The DOE indicates the study will include, but will not be limited to, the Nevada Academic Content Standards, special education, nonrenewable provisional conditional licensure, No Child Left Behind requirements, career and technical and business industry endorsements, alignment with the NEPF, national reciprocity, renewal requirements for standard and professional licenses, suspension and revocation grounds and processes, educator preparation program reviews, licensure fee structures, alternative and adult education requirements and deletion of endorsements no longer taught in Nevada as well as the addition of new endorsement areas. This Legislature approved funding for that study which should take place this Interim.

Assemblywoman Diaz:

We want our own Nevadans to become part of this teaching force. If someone has community ties and loves the community he or she works in, that person will be more likely to stay. In my tenure with the CCSD, I have seen that. I liked when you said it is about us all coming together to help fix this problem and encourage young people here become teachers, and for us as teachers to love what we do enough to transmit that passion to others who might consider teaching as a career. What is the percentage of Nevadans you have recruited for this school year? How do you envision attracting future Nevadans down the road?

Ms. Vesneske:

We have found that hiring ARL candidates has increased our percentage of Nevadans hired. We hired around 300 candidates from UNLV also, so our total percentage has increased. We generally hire around 50 percent Nevadans, but currently data indicates that around 70 percent have listed their address as in Nevada. We do not ask what a candidate's home state is, so we may be getting transplants. When you look at the attrition rate, about 15 percent of teachers left for family reasons.

We envision attracting Nevadans in many ways. With the TeachNevada scholarship expansion, we would like to go to individuals who receive the scholarship as sophomores, interview them and offer early conditional offers of employment. There are

very few jobs other than tech jobs where a student can know that if he or she finishes an education degree and is successful, there will be a job waiting within the CCSD. We want to reach out to high school students in our career and technical education programs to also tell them if they get their education degree, they will be able to work at CCSD. This gives them an incentive to go to college, get that degree and be guaranteed a job after college.

The third part of getting Nevadans teaching is our support for first generation college students. We need to support those students and help them navigate the system so we maximize the TeachNevada scholarship dollars.

Assemblyman Silberkraus:

Talking about the trade and magnet school programs for education, I know Clark High School has their Teacher Education Academy at Clark High School (TEACH) program. Do you have any data on how many people are leaving programs like TEACH and becoming CCSD teachers? How can we grow those programs?

Ms. Vesneske:

The metrics we have on these programs do not show a lot of these students matriculating to become teachers. The programs are small. Our goal is to send our recruiters to those classrooms to really talk about the resources available to help these high school students become teachers and get a job with CCSD. Many of those individuals in our high schools may be highly successful there, but when they get into college they learn there is much more money to be made in other professions. We need to at least make them understand that their chances for immediate employment after graduation are very good with a teaching degree.

Assemblyman Silberkraus:

What can we do to increase those numbers? There are places where you can get an associate of arts degree while you are graduating high school. Is there a way to build a program to fast track these students into a teaching career?

Ms. Vesneske:

Some of our high school programs where they can earn their degree early have promise. From an human resources perspective, it can be hard to think of someone at the age of 20 as a teacher, so we have to weigh that. We definitely need to send in more teachers to speak at middle school career days.

Assemblyman Silberkraus:

Are recruiters just going to college education departments, or are we sending them to science, math, English and other major departments too?

Ms. Vesneske:

This year, we decided to send recruiters to other UNLV colleges besides the College of Education. We sent a recruiter to the math department and we were welcomed with open arms. We touted the ARL program and did get some candidates, so yes, we are doing that now. We are going into psychology departments also, because often those graduates end up in our elementary ARL program.

Chair Roberson:

We are going to open Item XI, a presentation from Jim McIntosh from CCSD.

Jim McIntosh (Chief Financial Officer, Clark County School District):

This report will answer the question of how CCSD takes monies it receives, including supplemental funds outside of the per pupil basis from the Nevada Plan, and equitably distributes these funds within the District. We will also look at some of the places where the money distribution is not equitable and what we are doing about it.

Page 1 of my presentation ([Exhibit I](#)) asks what is equity? There is a difference between equity and adequacy. Sometimes we confuse the two, but the Nevada Plan is an equitable allocation model for school funds. It determines how to equitably distribute funds to school districts, and the districts have to then determine how to equitably distribute those funds to students.

Horizontal equity refers to similar students receiving similar funding. At the top of the chart, there are four similar students, all receiving \$4,000 per student because they are similarly situated. This is broadly defined. If we provide all full-day kindergarten students with a similar amount of money, it is considered equitable. As long as we are providing all high school seniors in a career and technical academy with a similar amount of funding, it is considered horizontal equity.

Vertical equity is somewhat the opposite of that because dissimilar students receive dissimilar funding. This is probably the most important piece of the equity issue. Some students cost more to educate, costing more in resources because they are dissimilar from other students. Whether it is because English is not their first language and they are ELL students, or that they have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) through a special education program, or because they are somewhere on the autism spectrum, or on the FRL program because they come from a household below the poverty line as defined by the federal government. Nationwide, it is accepted that these dissimilar students should receive dissimilar funding. That is equitable, and equity does not equate to equality. It is not giving everyone the same amount of money. It is recognizing that some students require more resources than others. That is equitable.

Equity in an allocation funding formula model provides for educational opportunity for students and common educational outcomes. I am talking seeing all of our students succeed in math, science, reading proficiency and graduation rates. We need to

recognize students that are in different circumstances as they come into the school district. Equity is providing students what they need, not just access to equal funding. We use the term fairness when talking about equity, but it is really more about need. Are we providing the students with what they need to get to those common educational outcomes that other students can reach without as many resources? That is what we aim for.

Page 3 ([Exhibit I](#)) addresses the funding that comes into CCSD. The bulk of our funding comes from the General Fund, which are the noncategorical funds for the daily operation of the schools, not assigned to a specific program like categorical funds. Our general operating fund is about \$2.3 billion for FY16. This fund is comprised of monies received on a per pupil basis as determined by the Legislature. It is currently \$5,512 per pupil. There are additional funds provided outside of the formula, including property taxes, governmental services taxes, interest earnings on investments, etc. All of this goes into the General Fund, which are monies the Superintendent and Board of School Trustees use to plan budgets to meet the mission of the District. There is an instructional need that has to be met with these funds, but they are considered noncategorical in that the Legislature or the State has not put restrictions on how CCSD spends these funds.

The categorical funds, what accountants would call “special revenue funds,” include funding going to special programs like class size reduction for early grades in our elementary schools. The State sets those mandated ratios for the class size requirements. When we allocate those funds to elementary schools, they are specific to getting those grades—kindergarten and grades 1, 2 and 3—to those mandated class size ratios. Another categorical fund is a special education fund to meet the special needs of students. Currently, the State provides around \$85 million to that fund. The budget for the special education fund is more than \$400 million in expenditures. The additional funding over the State’s input currently comes from the General Fund.

From the federal government, we receive categorical funding through Title I for at-risk students and Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) funding for special education. From the State we receive categorical funding for full day kindergarten, Zoom Schools for English Language Learners (ELL), Victory Schools for at-risk students and the Read by Grade Three program. There are more programs funded by both governments, but these are the main ones.

Page 4 ([Exhibit I](#)) shows how we allocate money to a school. We distinguish between monies from the General Fund and every other source because the category for which the money was given to us from each source can only be spent a certain way. Revenues within the General Fund are mainly provided by the State through the Distributive School Account (DSA) formula, the \$5512 per student. That money is allocated on a staff-based and enrollment-based funding formula.

The federal funds for Title I and IDEA are allocated based on a key metric. Title I funds are based on the percentage of students on the Free and Reduced-Price Lunch (FRL) program. The funds for IDEA are based on the disability of the student. This is equitable because these are dissimilar students, either at-risk or with a special need.

Most State grants are similarly allocated based on a key metric. There is also a proprietary formula for programs like the Zoom Schools, Victory Schools and Read by Grade Three. It is generally based on the need to provide equity for those students, getting the dollars to students who most need these programs.

Funding allocations to schools within a single school district many times has a greater impact than how you are allocated funds as a school district. The funding we receive as part of the Nevada Plan across the 17 Nevada school districts, the DSA, is very important to all of us. What we do with that money probably has a greater effect on student achievement than anything else.

The General Fund has a unique method for being distributed, but for most school districts nationally, this is how dollars are allocated internally. It is usually staff-based or enrollment-based. We do not provide revenue for the most part to a school. We provide a staffing model to the school, so the school enrollment drives the amount of staff that will be allocated to that school. There will always be a principal and an assistant principal or principals may be assigned based on the size of the enrollment. There will also be a full complement of teachers based on that enrollment number. Many school districts across the nation do the same model of funding.

Page 5 ([Exhibit I](#)) includes statistics from 2014 that are also posted on Nevada Report Card, www.nevadareportcard.com. Measuring the per pupil cost is probably the best metric for determining if a district is equitably distributing funds to schools. In 2014, the average CCSD cost per pupil was \$8,337. Calculating this number can be variable depending on what you choose to put in the numerator and the denominator. The National Center for Education Statistics, a federal organization, uses their own calculation method. Our data is similarly calculated by the DOE. We do not include our capital and debt service funds in calculating our per pupil figure. We also exclude Vegas PBS as a component unit of the CCSD.

The per pupil figure is the highest at the elementary level at \$8,618 per pupil, dropping to \$6,77 per pupil in middle school and dropping again to \$6,600 per pupil in high school. This is different than what we see nationally, where the secondary schools cost more than elementary schools. We think it may have to do with the size of our classes, but we are not sure. When we are trying to assess if we are funding equitably, we need to look at this figure instead of just the staffing model.

Senator Ford:

Are you saying every dollar the District receives, except for the capital and debt service, is included in this per pupil figure?

Mr. McIntosh:

Yes, but it does not include operation costs like overhead.

Senator Ford:

That range for elementary students from \$6,493 to \$30,971 contemplates us being able to go into the District and find an individual who, for example, is on an IEP that needs special services and receives \$30,971 to be educated in our system. Is that correct?

Mr. McIntosh:

These are ranges at the school level, so our lowest costing elementary school runs \$6,493 per pupil and our highest costing elementary school runs \$30,971 per pupil. Some of the highest cost schools are the rural schools and behavioral schools. That school, at \$30,971 per pupil is Goodsprings Elementary School, which has a small enrollment. There is a certain fixed cost to run a school, so that drives up the per pupil figure.

Chair Roberson:

How many students are in Goodsprings Elementary School?

Mr. McIntosh:

Sixteen.

Chair Roberson:

So this per pupil amount includes transportation, food services, and everything but capital, debt and central administration overhead, correct?

Mr. McIntosh:

Yes, it includes the school administration located in the building which includes the principal, the dean and assistant principal. Some central costs are allocated if related to instruction or student support services like professional development provided to teachers. Under National Center for Education Statistics guidelines, the central services—including finance, technology and human resources—are not included in those numbers.

The highest cost per pupil on the chart, \$59,477, is from a behavioral school. Within CCSD, these are unique schools, starting with no students enrolled, and adding students as they are referred in throughout the school year. Because of the fixed cost of the school, the per pupil cost is usually high because there must be teachers, administration and support staff at the school for when the students come in. The costs

can fluctuate, depending on how many students are in the school, but in any given year, these schools have some of the highest per pupil costs in the District.

The two largest metrics that drive the per pupil costs up are enrollment at a school and teacher costs. We take the total cost of the school and divide it by the enrollment to reach the per pupil cost. When we see a higher cost per pupil in a school, it usually means the teachers are expensive at that school because they are further along on the salary schedule or more educated, which is how our salary table works. There are other items that drive per pupil costs including special programs, strategic initiatives or central office resources.

Page 7 ([Exhibit I](#)) shows a comparison between two CCSD schools, a One-Star elementary, School A, and a Five-Star elementary school, School B. There is a difference in enrollment and School A has some qualifiers. It is a Zoom School for at-risk students, and a Title I school for the same reason. Both schools have a flex budget. The annual costs are similar, even though School A has 599 students and School B has 878 students. The at-risk School A has a higher per pupil cost at \$7,656 while School B's is \$5,383. This is an example of the distribution of funds going to where the need is.

If you look at the demographics, you can see that there are 369 ELL students at School A and only 61 ELL students at School B. School A also has all of its students on the Free and Reduced-Priced Lunch (FRL) program while School B only has 161 out of 878. The IEP special education students are also higher at 91 than the 64 IEP students at School B. This is what we would expect, that this school costs more per pupil because it requires more resources to educate its students. It is equitable between these two schools.

Page 8 ([Exhibit I](#)) shows the breakdown of costs at both schools. Staffing costs are fairly predictable because we know the salary table and the average teacher cost. When you break down these figures, School A's licensed teachers cost a little bit less. When we compare the school on a staffing level, page 9, we can see there are 19 teachers at School A and 31 at School B. Under support staff, this is referencing full time equivalent (FTE) positions, with the State Grants position. This is indicative of the fact that School A is a Zoom School, receiving additional State funding for its ELL population.

Senator Harris:

Looking at the administration costs, is that a reflection of a more experienced administration at School A or just more of them?

Mr. McIntosh:

The cost of administration at School A is \$188,322 versus School B's administration cost of \$161,341. Both schools have one principal and one assistant principal. The

difference is just that School A has a more experienced administrator with more seniority.

Senator Harris:

That is great since that is a One-Star school with an at-risk population. We need to put the more experienced administrators, as well as teachers, at these schools. There was also higher number of support staff at School A. Why is that?

Mr. McIntosh:

There would probably be more support staff at School A because they have Title I grants and Zoom School funds.

Page 10 ([Exhibit I](#)) shows an example of how we have to be careful when we talk about equitably distributing funds. This happens across the nation in school districts. The last example is one where funds are being equitably distributed. We need to get to a model where the dollars are truly following the students.

This example between a Title I school and a non-Title I school shows how hiring a long-term substitute can change the per pupil cost. The long-term substitute is cheaper than a licensed teacher with benefits, and these subs are more often going to at-risk, Title I schools to teach. With the same number of students in each class at the two schools, the increased cost of the licensed teacher versus the substitute actually doubles the per pupil allotment at the non-Title I school, even though the ratio of teachers to students is the same at both schools:

This policy is well intentioned, but when we talk about how we distribute dollars, it is inequitable. The per pupil payment to that school is \$1,000 and double that at the non-Title I school, even though the Title I school probably needs more resources. This is not equitable. We have to find a way to equitably distribute the dollars. This is a national challenge. How do we get out of this staffing-model, formula-based allocation methodology and more equitably begin distributing funds to those students who need it?

In some of the more affluent areas of CCSD, the per pupil cost of schools is higher simply because there are more senior teachers earning higher salaries at those schools and they want to stay where they are. They are not willing to go to the Title I schools. We have examined the average teacher salaries by schools and it is interesting. The thinking is that Title I schools would have lower teacher salaries overall. However, the reality is that they are all within a similar range, maybe a little lower at the Title I schools. The difference comes when the vacancies and substitutes are factored in and then we see the average teacher salaries really drop at those schools. That changes the per pupil costs and shows that we are not equitably distributing the money to the schools that need it the most.

Chair Roberson:

I would like to see what the average teacher salaries are at the Title I schools versus the non-Title I schools, especially when you take into account the vacancies. If you are paying a substitute teacher \$30,000 per year, what happens to the money you don't have to spend on a licensed teacher; the extra \$30,000 based on your example on page 10 ([Exhibit I](#)).

Mr. McIntosh:

We call that attrition savings. We budget for those savings, so we spend it. We know in advance that the teacher pipeline issue is a long-term issue and we recognize the fact that we are unable to fill every classroom with a qualified teacher and as a result, there will be savings there. We recognize those savings in the budget and allocate those funds to other programs. In some cases these savings go to providing raises to the bargaining units like the teachers.

Chair Roberson:

Are those attrition savings that you budget for going to those schools where the savings came from?

Mr. McIntosh:

No.

Chair Roberson:

It seems like the kids who need the resources the most are getting screwed under this system.

Mr. McIntosh:

I can talk about some of the solutions we have and some of the things we have tried.

Chair Roberson:

I am not blaming you or pointing fingers, I am just trying to have a dialogue, because what you are telling me is that the affluent schools or the non-Title I schools, are getting much more money per pupil than the Title I schools with the high vacancies.

Mr. McIntosh:

That is correct. I am talking from a General Fund perspective. In some cases, the Title I school will receive supplemental funds from the federal government or the State. In terms of how we allocate our General Fund dollars, the schools in lower socioeconomic areas with the large number of vacancies are subsidizing schools that are not in those areas.

Chair Roberson:

How can we ensure that attrition savings are put back into the school it came out of so we can have the equity we are all striving for?

Mr. McIntosh:

The District is looking at various models to change how we distribute funds. One model is a flexible budget. We have made no firm determinations on how to do this, but we have ideas on how we can make the funding allocations more equitable.

Chair Roberson:

If you save \$30,000 in one classroom because you are using a long-term substitute instead of a licensed teacher who is more expensive, you would accumulate \$30,000 in savings year after year. It would add up to real money. Should we give these schools the flexibility to take that money and provide incentives to have experienced teachers move to these schools. I know there is a certain flexibility now to pay teachers a little more to teach in the at-risk schools, but it seems to me the monies should go back to the schools where the savings came from in the first place. If we could use those monies to pay teachers more—maybe a great deal more—to teach in these schools, it makes more sense to me from an equity perspective than simply putting it back into the General Fund budget.

Mr. McIntosh:

My largest concern, looking at this from a financial lens, is that teacher salary costs are recurring costs. So if we talk about raising the starting teacher salary to \$40,000, using attrition savings in some cases, we only get a one-time savings. There may not be a recurring attrition savings, especially if we recruit teachers to these schools. The Title I school with a \$30,000 substitute teacher may have saved \$30,000, but if we spend it on something that is recurring and long-term, then we would have a problem in the budget. We have to be very careful with how we do that.

Assemblywoman Neal:

With the money that is not used because there is a long-term substitute teacher, is there a line item in the budget that we can follow to see where it goes? Technically, the savings are out and spent on something else. How do we know what it was spent on and if it was effective?

Mr. McIntosh:

We put a large line item in the budget titled attrition. That has been in the budget at CCSD for a very long time. In some cases, we can point to exactly where those funds go to, but mostly it creates budget capacity, allowing greater flexibility for spending in a given year.

Assemblywoman Neal:

I was reading a report on teacher allotment and have no idea if it applies to this situation, but when the long-term subs are at a school, does the next year's base get allocated with the weight of the long-term substitute pay or does it get readjusted when a licensed teacher is put into that slot?

Mr. McIntosh:

Are you talking about the DSA funding?

Assemblywoman Neal:

Yes, because when you explained General Fund and your elementary staffing, comparing schools, I was trying to understand. If I am a principal at school A and I have a lot of long-term substitutes in 2013 and in 2015 I can hire 14 licensed teachers, does my salary increment increase? Or am I now being tapped at the 14 long-term sub money so I have to cut a licensed teacher's pay?

I have met licensed teachers at Title I schools who say they have to take a \$15,000 pay cut to work there. They are not being paid equally with the teacher in Summerlin and yet they have the same level of experience.

Mr. McIntosh:

We do not pay our Title I teachers any different than we pay non-Title I teachers. When it comes to the way the District internally allocates staffing and funding, the fact that this school had a long-term substitute teacher would not affect its staffing going forward. They would be allocated the FTE again in the future and they are allowed to fill it with as senior a teacher as possible. We just allocate the position and it is up to the school to fill the position.

We budget based on an average licensed teacher salary. In terms of the DSA in our funding, that is based off of a base year. We are in that base year now; the even-numbered years are base years for education funding. The average teacher cost may get driven down in the budget, but there are teacher allotment tables in place that allow us to get a certain allotment of teachers. It could affect funding in the future because we are reducing our costs in some way. We always have to be careful in the base year because our expenditures will be used as the basis for determining the budget in the next Legislative Session. So it does not affect the internal funding in any way.

Chair Roberson:

Why would it not make sense, if you have a Title I school with vacancies, to take the attrition savings and allocate it to the other teachers in that school because their burdens will be higher? If you have substitute teachers, the licensed teachers will have to help the sub, or maybe their class sizes will increase. Why would we not take that money and redistribute it to those teachers at that school? When we are trying to incentivize teachers to come to these Title I schools, paying those who are there would send the right message—that we value those teachers and want them in those schools.

Mr. McIntosh:

I have no problem with that idea. Our goal is to get a qualified teacher into those positions. The money would be well spent recruiting and providing a salary table where

we break that psychological \$40,000 barrier as a starting salary. Using the money to fill vacancies will help the District. My concern, again, is that these are one-time savings.

Chair Roberson:

We have the vacancies. If we look at this year, the 2015-2016 school year, say you have a School X, a Title I school. Pick an number on how many vacancies there could be, multiply that by \$30,000, and you have that extra money. Rather than putting it into the General Fund, why not allocate it to the other personnel in that building for that school year.

Mr. McIntosh:

All these things have to be collectively bargained.

Pat Skorkowsky (Superintendent, Clark County School District):

That could be done, but there may be administrators who choose to have a long-term substitute versus a licensed teacher so they can pay more to certain individuals in their building. We have to account for that. We are looking at models that explore that piece with certain sets of accountability so that money goes to ensure a licensed teacher is in every one of those classrooms.

Senator Harris:

Knowing what we know about the populations at these Title I schools and knowing we are getting a cost savings because there is not a licensed teacher in a classroom and that results in a cost savings, my question is why are we not redirecting that money back into that school in the form of some type of resource? Certainly there are other resources other than expanding budgets.

Mr. Skorkowsky:

That is one model we are looking at; how we can do that equitably. In the current budget cycle, we cannot do that because the money has already been allocated to other areas. In future budget cycles, we are exploring doing this. Looking at the concept of flex budgeting, trying to ensure we have the training for our support staff and administrators to be able to administer a flexible budget is the first priority. We are in the process of going through with that training so they can understand that if those funds are allocated back to that school, how would the funds be used and is there accountability. We are working on that for next year.

Senator Harris:

I think the conversation needs to be centered more on adequacy and also be centered on the student. We talk about the money following the child, and in this scenario, it is not. We talk about equity and that is important, but maybe we need to be talking about adequacy and whether we are providing adequate funds, adequate teachers and adequate resources for every child in Clark County. Most particularly, whether we are

providing adequate funds to those at-risk and vulnerable populations that seem to have funds diverted and so they do not get what they need for an adequate education.

Mr. Skorkowsky:

When you look at the chart on page 7 ([Exhibit I](#)), if school A were to hire all their teachers, their per pupil expenditure would go higher. We understand that and we are looking at how to ensure that does take place.

Senator Harris:

I am okay with that. I think we need to focus on adequacy and recognize it does not cost the same amount to educate every child. That is why it is important to focus on student-centered education, putting in parameters to make sure those dollars follow the child.

Senator Ford:

We are in dangerous territory here because we are from different parties and agreeing on this. It may mean the same thing, but equity is what we are talking about, not adequacy. The comparison on page 10 ([Exhibit I](#)) of the Title I school versus the non-Title I school makes me wonder if you actually picked this out of CCSD or is this fictional?

Mr. McIntosh:

At the bottom of the page it says this is a hypothetical scenario used for illustrative purposes. However, this example is close to the cost of a long-term sub at a Title I school including benefits. The average teacher salary now with benefits is about \$76,000 and the average new teacher cost is about \$63,000 with benefits.

Senator Ford:

I was asking because it would be helpful for me to hear an actual average differential that can inform us relative to what Senator Roberson was talking about—putting that money back into the school instead of using hypotheticals and saying \$30,000 should go back into the Title I school. If the average differential is really \$15,000, or if it is \$45,000, I would like to know so we can see how much in resources we need to be reallocating, or considering relative to this reallocation, in different models.

Mr. McIntosh:

That makes sense. I was trying to point out that although there is a staffing model set up that is equitable, the dollars are not following the students in some cases.

Senator Ford:

Can you explain what a flexible budget is? That term has been used several times and I do not know what it means.

Mr. Skorkowsky:

I can explain that in the next Agenda item.

Chair Roberson:

We need to know how big a problem this is in the District. How much money is there that should be going to Title I schools but is not going there because of the teacher vacancies and where is that attrition savings going?

My second question comes from Assemblyman David Gardner who asked me to ask you if we can get data from the CCSD to this Committee and the Technical Advisory Committee. We would like access to a large amount of data from the District so we can run numbers.

Mr. Skorkowsky:

Yes, we will provide the data.

Regarding the attrition savings, specific projects that have to get funded are part of what the money is used for. For example, we have deferred maintenance that is not in the budget for things like carpet and painting, etc. We put \$14 million of the attrition savings into deferred maintenance this year. It is currently on the chopping block. We talk specifically about a human capital management system. We do not have money for additional systems and structures into the system. We purchased Infinite Campus through attrition savings over the year, setting aside money each year to pay for these large things. We do not have the extra funds built into the budget for any major purposes or structures based. Those are a few examples of where attrition savings goes in to actually rebuild the infrastructure of the CCSD.

Chair Roberson:

I understand, but I am sure you understand that this is not a satisfactory answer to anyone on this Committee.

Mr. Skorkowsky:

Then I would ask you to fund our system so we can do that. I understand your frustration, but you have to understand that if we are expected to build a human capital management system, I do not have \$20 million sitting around that is going to build our system. I understand what you are saying, but we cannot build the infrastructure without the use of some of these savings.

Chair Roberson:

I am not suggesting that those are not important funding priorities but we are talking about equity within schools. These title I schools are the ones that are failing consistently; these are the schools where the test scores are at the bottom; these are the schools where the graduation rates are at the bottom and these are the schools with the teacher vacancies. I understand what you are saying. I am not being dismissive of

what you are saying, but I also think it is true that everyone on this Committee wants to see this equity issue addressed.

Senator Ford:

Far from being dismissive, I did not know what that number was. It is hard to help when I do not know what you need. Ultimately, if you are using these attrition savings to pay for Infinite Campus and other things you think you need, then those are the numbers we the Legislature, not just this Committee, need to know so we can go back in the 2017 Session and budget accordingly. I am not suggesting you do not fund the programs that you have been funding with the attrition savings. What I am asking for is, what is the amount of money you need to fix this equity issue and what do you need to fund the programs that have been relying on attrition funds?

Assemblywoman Neal:

I was reading the comprehensive annual report and trying to find the path of the attrition savings. I need to know what to look for to find it. I saw transfers from a fund and transfers to a fund, but it irritates me that this money, which is noncategorical spending, which means it is flexible once it gets in your hands, is being flipped and used for something that I cannot identify. It irritates me because I am conservative with money and I want to know where it is, where it goes and what it is spent on. If there is another budget on this website under the budget icon, what is it called and where can I find that attrition savings line item?

The previous presenter from human resources said the first year ARL teachers end up going to the at-risk schools, which we know are Title I schools. She said those teachers have a lower salary, and we know they have no experience. Is there any connection or direct relationship between a cost savings that may be in someone's mind because they are getting this additional allocation for their students? Is there the thought that somehow we are saving on the teacher's salary because we are giving them so much money for the ELL, FRL population? Is it somewhere in the dialogue to say that we could save because look how much they're getting over here so let's put a first year here because overall we can save in totality for the District?

It does not make sense to me to have the least skilled teachers in your most challenging schools. To then hear this part about the shifting of the money because the long-term sub is at a school. There have been long-term substitutes in the Title I schools for almost 15 years. I am not saying there is not something systemic out there creating this situation, but at the end of the day, if we are focused on academic achievement and student performance and that is the goal, why would we make those kinds of decisions that literally step on our own foot? It makes no sense to me. It does not seem fruitful at all.

Mr. McIntosh:

If you go to the District website, the comprehensive annual financial reports (CAFR) might not be the best source to find those things. The CAFR is an accounting document. The budget is the document provided to the Department of Taxation and you can go through it line item by line item on the District's website. I suggest you go to the CCSD website and in the header there is a title called Open Book which we created many years ago to make the budget as simple as possible to understand. There are several icons to choose from on that page and one is a line item budget for every single line in the District. It is broken out by salaries and benefits. You can look at salaries, salaries by employee group, and there is an attrition figure there for every employee group.

What it will not tell you is directly where that attrition savings goes, because it created budget capacity allowing us to budget for additional items. In some cases, it goes back to teacher contracts and those schools are subsidizing some of the higher end teachers is what is occurring.

Senator Hardy:

If we look at the percentage of teacher vacancies, how much money across the school district was saved and reallocated by using substitutes in the classroom instead of licensed professionals? How many years have we gotten used to having this attrition savings in our budget? What if we took those attrition savings and used it to hire three more recruiters?

We may have a cognitive dissonance of depending on something while we are trying to do something else. If we do not do the thing we are doing, we will not get to the something else. I have been frustrated for some time with the barrel-versus-bucket budgeting to the point that in 2003 I suggested we have a fence around books, so we put a fence around book money and we got more money than we expected.

Then I was frustrated when we thought as a Legislature we were giving a 2 percent raise to teachers and the teachers informed me it was not 2 percent. It was part of the whole bargaining thing. I look at this attrition savings somewhat as a slush fund we have gotten used to. We have used it for various things, but not for the very thing we need most—getting teachers recruited and hired. If we as a Legislature have to stop looking at giving a barrel of money to the school district and look at the bucket theory where you have a bucket for teacher salary, a bucket for children's programs, a bucket for maintenance, a bucket for capital expenses and a bucket for administration, that may be what the Legislature is interested in doing. Heretofore we have given that barrel of money and there is "flexibility" in that, but the frustration we are hearing today is that we may be frustrated about the barrel and want more accountability.

I echo the questions asked by my fellow Committee members about this practice involving attrition savings. How long would it take for us to stop depending on that

money? The Legislature wants to know what our obligation is to deferred maintenance, etc. This last Session there were people who bit the bullet and gave more to education than we ever have. We are not worried in a partisan way about spending for education, we have stepped up.

Mr. McIntosh:

I believe your question is what is the attrition figure? It is approximately \$70 million for teachers. There will always be a percentage of attrition savings in any large organization—there are 40,000 employees at CCSD. We also have difficulty in hiring support staff and administrators, but we have had a particularly hard time with the teacher pipeline.

Chair Roberson:

Is that a yearly figure?

Mr. McIntosh:

Yes. We have had lower totals, but we have increased the amount in past years to pay additional amounts to teachers in the salary package. We increased it in the hopes to recruit and retain teachers. Our goal would be to use those funds in some way to put a qualified teacher into those vacancies because this is a systemic issue. Instead of taking the money and spreading it around to what is occurring right now, let us solve the problem with the funding. Our goal would be to use those funds.

As I said before, I am always concerned that these are one-time funds, not necessarily recurring. They are recurring right now because we have a teacher pipeline issue, and I think it will be 4 or 5 years before we fix it. The highest the attrition savings figure has been is \$70 million. It has been lower, but the District has budgeted for that in the past.

Senator Hardy:

As I understand it, \$70 million is per year, and we think in bienniums, so that is \$140 million, correct?

Mr. McIntosh:

Correct.

Assemblyman Silberkraus:

I will say that \$70 million would make a lot of difference in a lot of kids' education. That horrifies me.

Mr. Skorkowsky:

Seventy million dollars has made a difference in a lot of kids' education. That money goes back into projects within schools and with the District, so that money has not been misused in any way, shape or form. That money is accountable. Our return on investment (ROI) group, which includes people from the Las Vegas Global Economic

Alliance, Metro Chamber of Commerce and Nevada Succeeds, has gone through our budget, so that money is accounted for and is going back into the schools. It is just not necessarily going back into teacher salaries.

Assemblyman Silberkraus:

Or into the schools where it is most needed. I would like a full accounting of the \$70 million.

Mr. Skorkowsky:

To your point, that money may be going back in different capacities into that school.

Chair Roberson:

What we are talking about here is transparency and we would like to see it. It may be fully transparent, but this Committee would like to see where that money is being spent.

Senator Ford:

Mr. Skorkowsky, I hear what you are saying. I am not saying that what you spend the money on is not important. I think it is important and I want to know what it cost so we can try to budget for it appropriately and use those monies that would otherwise be used in education classrooms for that purpose. My question is, how does this discussion play into our Committee's charge of considering equity relative to a possible breakup of the CCSD?

Mr. McIntosh:

I do have suggestions at the end of this presentation. We want to set the table for what equity means and allocating those dollars out. We are not doing anything differently than a lot of school districts across the nation. This staffing model is not uncommon. I am just saying that in many cases, because of this model, the dollar does not always follow the student. We would like to fix that as well and we have ideas on how we can do that.

On page 11 ([Exhibit I](#)), there is an example of a staffing model provided in the General Fund. A school automatically gets a principal, an assistant principal when the enrollment reaches 550 students or more and a school counselor when a school enrollment is at 500 or more. The ratio of students to teacher at each grade level is shown. It is the cost of the teachers that will vary. When the cost is at the higher end, the dollar sometimes does not follow the students with greater needs. That is what I was trying to point out with the hypothetical situation on page 10. We agree that needs to be rectified. Superintendent Skorkowsky has begun implementing several things to rectify this problem. They are systemic and long-term problems that need to be addressed.

We talked about how expensive rural schools and behavioral schools can be, you can see those figures on pages 12 and 13 ([Exhibit I](#)).

Page 14 shows data from the Nevada Report Card website related to IEP, ELL and FRL programs. National studies have shown that these students require more resources to educate. We need to find a better way to allocate additional dollars to these students.

The State has begun doing this. In the 2013 Session it began the Zoom School process for our ELL students, full-day kindergarten, Victory Schools, Read by Grade Three and we are glad to see we can begin directing dollars to where the students are concentrated in these areas.

At the Technical Advisory Committee there was a comment made about what a fantastic school district we were back in the 1960s. It is interesting because you will watch the school district change as this demographic changes. As you have more students coming to the CCSD who are living in poverty, where English is not their first language, where they have special education needs, you see the cost of the District change. If you do not see the dollars following the student, and if you do not see additional funding coming to the District in some way for those students, that is where you are going to see changes in student achievement.

Page 15 ([Exhibit I](#)) illustrates services to students broken down by ethnicity. The chart shows 79 percent of the African American student community in the FRL program. Page 16 shows the changing demographics at CCSD since 2013.

This demographic data is helpful for the District. I was on the task force for changing the funding formula, and one of the focuses was to begin weighting the funding formula like the majority of U.S. school districts do theirs. The Legislature has begun that work. There is a process for beginning to recognize the inequalities in not providing for some of these students and instead having the dollars begin to follow them, whether it is in providing categorical funds or weighting the funding formula to recognize that school districts need additional sources to achieve those common educational outcomes.

Zoom School funding, page 13 ([Exhibit I](#)), aimed at ELL students, will total \$39,350,342 next year. There are 29 schools involved with an average of \$1,854 going to each student. We are grateful for this funding. It is a good example of dollars following students and equitable funding. It is dissimilar funding going to dissimilar students.

Victory Schools are new to CCSD this year. The 22 schools identified as Victory Schools are listed on page 18 ([Exhibit I](#)). They are schools with a high number of students living in poverty, considered at-risk for that reason. Each one of these schools received approximately \$1,137 per pupil per Senate Bill 432. This is another good example of categorical dollars following the student.

SENATE BILL (S.B.) 432: Provides for the distribution of money to certain public schools designated as Victory schools. (BDR S-1187)

Looking at the illustration on page 19, you can see our student equity focus, having the dollars follow the student, finding out what is most equitable to the student. To use a baseball analogy, you have kids sitting on third base who just want to get home, and then you have some kids are on first base who have to get all the way around. These are five areas the Legislature and the State have taken an interest in: poverty, ELL, special education, gifted & talented and geographic region. We have to provide ways to get more funding and resources to these programs so the money follows the students in these areas.

Our goals, page 20, are the common education outcomes of all our students: reading proficiency, math/science proficiency, graduation, college readiness and career readiness. All students should have the opportunity to reach these common educational outcomes. We do this by providing equitable funding, identifying those students in the dissimilar situations and having the funding follow the student.

There are ways to do this and we have had some good ideas from the Committee. Here are some of the things CCSD has done so far:

Two years ago we started an initiative called Ensuring Every Dollar Counts, within which a ROI Committee was formed. This is important to the CCSD. We measure the ROI from our departments. We have a committee that specifically does this, led by members of the Metro Chamber of Commerce and our staff. We measure the internal efficacy of instructional programs led by a member of the Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance. We also look at a high level, looking at the ROI, in this case the academic return on investment. We have begun taking the per pupil cost of a school and looking at expectations that go with that cost. If we are spending more money at a school we expect to see additional achievement.

We need to transition to flexible budgets, program based budgets and weighted student funding. Flexible budgets are where we take staffing model dollars allocated to a school, convert them to dollars and allow the schools to buy the things they need. There are some nonnegotiables, but by giving the schools the dollars rather than the staffing amount, the school has more local control to address its need and decision making is pushed to the school, not the District.

Program based budgeting identifies areas in the District's budget where we are less efficient in our spending, including instructional programs. We need to be measuring those that we incorporate into our curriculums and decide if they are providing additional achievement.

Weighted student funding the Legislature has been promoting is important. Next year is the first year we will be using this formula. It will begin for special education students. School districts in the State will begin receiving weighted funding for special education

students and our expectation is that at some point our ELL and FRL students will begin receiving some sort of weighted funding in the future.

We believe transitioning from the current model to these models are a good first step in ensuring that the dollars follow the students and go to where the resources are needed the most.

Finally, we need to find a way to equitably distribute qualified teachers across the CCSD. We recognize there are a large number of vacancies in our Title I schools. We have to figure out solutions to equitably distribute qualified teachers across the District to fill those vacancies. We need to determine if additional compensation or bonuses will incentivize teachers to go to at-risk schools and how much it would cost to retain them there. Are there things outside of financial compensation that we could use to recruit and retain teachers to those schools? Currently, when we talk about equitably distributing teachers, we are simply looking at the compensation incentives provided by S.B. 511.

Senator Hardy:

Can I use the term “empowerment school” when talking about the flexible budget?

Mr. McIntosh:

It is similar to that concept, yes.

Assemblywoman Neal:

I know we had an adequacy study and until 2012 we were still trying to figure out how to adequately fund based on vertical and horizontal equity. Those two things were not combined in the discussion for funding. I recognize you were operating on a broken leg and within that broken leg concept, you created a way to function and get things done. I understand that, totally and completely.

I also feel that when we knew the system is broken, we could have been smarter with our at-risk schools. We talked about it. We saw the pain of children for more than 10 years as they traveled through that process. They are the ones who were affected; who graduated and did not know how to read. They are the ones functioning in our community with a broken leg because we were broken. At the end of the day, we did not give them the education they needed although our system was broken. I know you were not there as superintendent during this time, but if we know this is still a problem, why would we continue to have another group of kids who are broken?

Mr. Skorkowsky:

That is part of the reason we started this work 18 months ago with our ROI effort and examining how we can change our budgeting system to provide better services to those students. We embarked on something that has only touched the surface of what needs to be done. We have approximately 180 schools on flexible budgets, which is where we

allocate a specific dollar amount per student to the school and then let school officials purchase services with that money.

If the school is a Title I school, it receives additional money. There can also be funding for ELL from Zoom and Title III dollars. Title III is part of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 aimed at children with limited English proficiency and immigrant youth. What we want to look at is if those extra pots of money going to those schools are being used effectively to change the instruction in those classrooms. We have never looked at program evaluation to determine if a specific instructional program is working and if we are getting our money's worth. Now we are doing that. We now make these instructional programs go through a request for proposal process to determine what academic achievement we can expect to see if these programs are used effectively in the school.

We are also now looking at how Title I dollars are spent in the schools. We are asking staff at Title I schools with the same achievement levels year after year, what makes them think the programs or model they are using will be any more effective in the future. We are reevaluating how Title I schools are using those funds and asking if we need to move staff around or make other changes to ensure we are moving forward. We have never done this before.

We are also looking at the work internally. How are we supporting these schools? Are we being efficient and effective? This is also new. The flexible budgets allow the schools—with a very specific set of accountability—to use those dollars as they see fit. If money is being spent on an instructional coach, learning strategist or behavior specialist, then we ask what metrics are in place at the school to show that this position and this person is making a difference in student achievement outcomes.

No one else in the nation is doing this type of work. We do not have any models to reference. However, it is being done in the business world, so we use our business and community experts to teach us how to proceed.

Within the flexible budgets, we also get flexibility in Title I where schools can purchase wraparound services involving a team of experts and family working together for the child. This is a new capability that has only become available in the last 2 years. We are changing, but it is not easy in a system where we do not have a clear definition of best practices, since it has not been done before.

Senator Ford:

I am interested in what it would cost the CCSD to raise the starting salary to \$40,000, then raising salaries correspondingly across the board.

M. McIntosh:

We have run several models just to see what it would look like. That would be around a 15 percent increase over the current starting salary. There is a significant price tag.

Senator Ford:

I know it would be significant, but I want to know what it is. Whether we can get there or not is a different discussion, but at least we would know what we are up against.

Mr. McIntosh:

I can get you an exact figure, but off the top of my head, it would be somewhere between \$40 million and \$50 million annually.

Mr. Skorkowsky:

We are working with the Clark County Education Association (CCEA) to look at a new salary structure. Part of that is looking at a \$40,000 starting salary. If the new salaries were to go in, the approximate cost would be between \$19 million and \$20 million.

Senator Ford:

Now I am confused.

Mr. McIntosh:

To clarify, the salary table we are working with in the CCEA puts the starting salary to \$40,000 but the increases across the board are not proportionately incremental. We are basically front loading the money for the new teachers, but it is less money to increase the senior teacher salaries with this model.

Mr. Skorkowsky:

We have placed all our instructional coaches back into classrooms. They will start the third week in December and be into classrooms after winter break. It was Title I and Title II money paying for those coaches. Title I will now go back into the school's Performance Zone to support instructional programs. We will have to get an amendment with the DOE to reallocate that Title I money.

Those teachers may choose to get their prep paid so he or she can continue to work in those schools as instructional coaches. To that end, we are also using the Title II funds, which is federal money for preparing, training, and recruiting high quality teachers and principals. We are putting \$1.4 million of Title II funds back into teacher recruiting for the coming school year.

We are also working on a complete revamp of our Educational Services Division. We need to change the model that created a per pupil cost of \$59,000 at one school. At the same time, we need to look at how that money can be reallocated to schools for behavioral prevention programs instead of having a system that remediates students after the misbehavior. We need positive behavioral supports such as a Schools Targeting Alternative Reform On-Site (STAROn) program designed to ensure students are getting school support to prevent behavior issues before they occur. This will increase our academic achievement because students in our behavior schools are usually academically challenged or behind their peers.

We are also in the process of redesigning the Instructional Design and Professional Learning Division. We will focus with WestEd, a national organization that helps schools, districts, & states improve education through innovative research, evaluation, and consulting, to ensure we provide a minimum level of services through this Division and that the monies freed up from instructional coaches will go back to Performance Zones for professional development. This includes considering additional training to schools and looking at programs like Reading Rangers and Predictive Assessment of Reading to see if they can be built into the system for the next academic year.

I do want to present to you a full program on flexible budgets down the road so we can help you understand how it works. Currently, we are looking at training additional support staff and administrators how to use this budgeting model and use the money to promote student achievement.

We have to be cautious because we are not budgeting on the actual cost of teachers in those at-risk schools. We are using an average cost of teachers. We know it is important to move to that process of autonomy and empowerment so decisions are made at the school level with the administrators and parents on board.

Lastly, we are looking at what it would take to get experienced teachers to move to our at-risk schools. We are in the process of creating a survey to our teachers asking them that very question. We know it is a complex issue, but we want to know if it would just take a monetary incentive, or if it is something else. Sometimes it is an administrator or the climate and culture of the school. Sometimes it is having other like minds in the school, creating an incentive for multiple teachers to go to that school. Maybe it would be the District covering the health insurance costs for that teacher, or allowing that teacher to accelerate on the pay scale. We need to find out what it is going to take. We know a \$40,000 starting salary would help us recruit teachers, but it is also important that we get these licensed teachers into our at-risk schools and keep them there.

Chair Roberson:

We do want to know about the attrition savings not going back to the schools where the monies came from. Our charge, in part, with this Committee is to look at equity issues and try to increase equity within CCSD. Many on this Committee are upset about this. We will revisit that topic in future meetings.

Senator Denis:

With the flexible budget, are there things where your hands are tied? Do we as Legislators need to change anything to give you more freedom to implement the flexible budget model?

Mr. Skorkowsky:

Flexible budgeting is easier at the middle school and high school level because there are more resources and not as many constraints. The challenges at the elementary

level include class size reduction and how that has limited flexibility. There may be an outstanding first grade teacher who could teach 30 students effectively, but we cannot do that. We may say there needs to be one teacher for 30 students and then we may need to do pullout as the Read by Grade Three program goes forward. We need to do more reading skills centers like we have in the Zoom Schools. We do not currently have that flexibility at the elementary level, though.

We are exploring how we can provide that support while still meeting the guidelines and ensuring we are following the law when it comes to class size reduction. Sometimes our hands are tied. We are now purchasing supports and wraparound budgets through our flexible budgets and Title I dollars. We are looking at after school programs to extend the learning day and exploring how to pay for this through the flexible budget. We have extended instruction in the past but not with the flexibility of being able to say maybe we need to provide more services. Victory Schools give us that flexibility to say the first hour of school could be academically based and the second hour could be more socially based so students have the opportunity to explore individual interests.

Chair Roberson:

I will open Item XII on the Agenda, issues of concern from CCSD teachers regarding the reorganization of the District.

Vikki Courtney (President, Clark County Education Association):

We represent more than 18,000 educators and licensed professionals in southern Nevada. In recent years, the Clark County Education Association (CCEA) has been assessing the wants and needs of teachers. We have been soliciting input from teachers about what we can best do for them. Meaningful professional development is one requested area that we have focused on. We have grown professional development and quadrupled the number of educators enrolled in our National Board Certification program.

As you are acutely aware and have discussed today, we have a serious problem retaining educators. Regardless of the outcome of this body, I also come here today to respectfully ask that the teacher shortage continue to be the focus. We must solve the contributing issues that hinder recruitment and retention. Every week that passes, more teachers are leaving. These are veteran educators as well as those just hired this year.

I have a petition ([Exhibit J](#)) that more than 3,000 educators signed over the last week asking for this Legislative body to have CCSD explain what it is doing to address our frozen salaries, eroded benefits and working conditions that are getting worse. I hope you can review the heartfelt comments left by many talented and dedicated educators. Teachers will remain focused on what drew them to teaching in the first place; their students. We cannot expect different results by doing more of the same. I have submitted my written testimony ([Exhibit K](#)).

John Vellardita (Executive Director, Clark County Education Association):

The CCEA comes here with no preconceived outcome. We are not in a position where we favor breaking up CCSD. We want to have a discussion about how to improve the education delivery system in the fifth largest school district in the country.

When A.B. 394 was conceived in the last Session, we opposed it, saying it would amount to what we called “zip code education.” It was flawed and did not take into account a primary factor this Committee is now looking at—the equity in funding issue, so each and every kid gets an adequate education as spelled out in the Nevada Constitution. In the course of that Session, we offered amendments that were accepted and led to where we are today. We welcome this discussion. We know that whenever you have a discussion like this, you will come up against forces of the status quo who oppose change.

The discussion we just had around the budget and how the fifth largest school district in the country works that budget and whether the money truly follows the students, is a reflection of why we need to look at the way we do business. We know that the current system does not work, even though some aspects of it work well, But there is a failure in the system. We are in the second year of a crisis we saw coming; the teacher shortage. There is no strategic vision in the recruitment process, no 5-year plan that addresses it while retaining the teachers we already have.

We heard how we play with budgets. Consider these facts. The last few years, the CCSD has over-budgeted—\$61 million in 2015, \$73 million the year before that and \$56 million in the year before that. When the last Legislative Session ended, 23 days later the Clark County School District Board of Trustees declared there was a \$67 million deficit. The Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) which is based on actual revenue and actual expenditures was just issued, showing a net fund balance of \$105.6 million.

So the slide you saw with the hypothetical comparison between a \$30,000 substitute versus a \$60,000 licensed teacher in two different schools does not show the whole picture. A substitute teacher costs about \$20,000 a year, not \$30,000, and even if you take the average starting salary of a teacher, not a first year teacher, the District tells us that is \$64,000. That is a difference of \$44,000 and if you multiply that by 750 positions, it is anywhere from \$35 million to \$40 million. That is on top of the \$50 million on an over-budget and \$105.6 in an ending fund budget. The money does not follow the student under this system.

In all fairness to CCSD, they were burdened with a decision made as a result of an economic collapse in this State, part of the national recession. So in 2009, there was a huge deficit in the State budget. During the 2010 Special Session there was almost \$1 billion cut, most of it in education funding. From that point forward, every school district, this one in particular, had to find how to live within its means. That meant

making cuts. This District made many cuts, starting with about \$100 million right after that Special Session.

Every budget after that, up until this last Legislative Session, has caused the people who run CCSD to do it with less. As a result, you start getting creative about how you use money and how you may have funded positions not filled and savings and attrition, and then you start funding a budget based on attrition savings. This is the wrong way to do a budget.

We would argue that given the fact we are in a crisis, the strategic utilization of that money should be an investment in front line educators. That is where the need is, because 78 percent of the vacancies at the start of the school year were in the at-risk schools. They reduced it, yes, but that is pennies in the bucket in terms of its impact.

We have a major problem in the ranks of 18,000 teachers. We started the school year after close to \$800 million was passed in this last Legislative Session, of which 75 percent of it came to Clark County, and we agreed to the categorical funding models because we now know where that money gets spent. We started that school year with close to 18,000 teachers taking a cut in pay. They took a 1.125 percent cut in pay and then started the school year with no increase. Close to 1,600 of those teachers had invested in their own education to get additional degrees. They were promised a raise but did not get it.

We then had to deal with a health care crisis with our self-funded health insurance fund which resulted in us having to ask teachers to pay more out of pocket. The CCSD did the right thing and contributed almost \$10 million annually. This is how the school year started and it is how the school year continues.

Every day, 25,000 kids start and end their day with a substitute teacher. This is the second year in a row for this. Three thousand teachers were projected to be hired next year and we do not have a viable plan.

We welcome the discussion around how can we improve the education delivery system because we think that is how it should be framed. The form the reorganization takes—whether it is precincts, one district, or any configuration—comes after answering the question of what is a viable delivery system for the fifth largest school district in the country. First and foremost, money should not follow the students, money should start with the students. Budgets should be based on the unique needs of the student populations. Budgets should be developed at the school sites.

Slide 12 of our CCEA presentation ([Exhibit K](#)) shows the current top-down education delivery model of CCSD, with the administration on top and students and families on the bottom.

Slide 13 ([Exhibit K](#)) shows what happened in the 2015 Legislative Session. All the money for very specific categorical programs came out of the Session and was supposed to go to CCSD.

Slide 14 shows what happened. The tax dollars went to the State. The 2015 Legislature took risks and made an investment in public education, attempting to restore what was taken away in 2009 and 2010. It went into the system. The health care delivery system is at the top of this top-down system.

The last time this Committee met, we heard of a new vision from the superintendent when he introduced the concept of seven Instructional Precincts. We have not embraced this model, but we see it as the same as this graph with the precinct administration toward the top instead of mid-level administration, slide 15 ([Exhibit K](#)).

It does not fundamentally change the educational delivery system, it creates another level of administration. The money goes into the system. It does not start with the student.

Slide 16 ([Exhibit K](#)) represents a typical CCSD class. It is a wide range of unique needs that define that classroom.

Slide 17 shows our idea of a new delivery system that starts with the student and the parent. All money and resources should be calculated based on that premise. The model would look like this illustration where the administration, principal, teacher and support staff all service the student.

Slide 18 ([Exhibit K](#)) shows what it could look like with the current CCSD model flipped upside-down. This way, if revenues come from the State, they go directly to students. This happens by developing budgets at the school site, working with parents and teachers around the unique needs of those students.

We realize there are other services a large school district has that would need to remain centralized. We know that some systems, including transportation, affect the way instruction occurs in the school district. Bus schedules determine the start and end of the school day. We think there is a disconnect when transportation schedules are set up that way. It should be on the table to examine.

We believe that community and parents should have more direct input and control of the school buildings in their community. I have submitted my written testimony about what we believe it will take to help turn this District around ([Exhibit K](#)).

Risks and great leadership occurred in the 2015 Session. Each of you was a part of that. At a time when many were saying money was not the source of the problem with education in Nevada, many of you under the leadership of the Governor said we need

to make an investment. Not just any kind of investment, but an investment that said, "This is where the money goes, this is the return we expect and here is the accountability." That took leadership and that took risk. We need that kind of leadership at the school level.

What are the core competencies need to run operational systems and programs that CCSD currently runs? We run the second largest transportation agency in the State. What is the criteria to run that kind of agency? We have a \$2.3 billion budget and we have a recruitment problem on a scale we have never seen before. In a market with a shortage of teachers, what is the criteria to run an effective recruitment process?

Before today's presentation, I was approached by a school board trustee who said, "Shame on you, you have been misquoting the \$800 million that the Legislature passed. You have been telling teachers it goes to them." I have never said that. There is a disconnect when trustees, who depend on staff to present them with accurate information, get misinformed about facts. We need a different look at the leadership model at the school board level so appropriate decisions can be made with accurate facts. We will work with this Committee and want to reiterate, that the student needs to be at the center of everything we do.

Senator Ford:

Can you explain the chart on page 18 ([Exhibit K](#))? I think what you mean by the funding has to start with the child at the school level is that as a principal, I need to be responsible for budgeting what I need for my school. Can you tell me practically what that looks like?

Mr. Vellardita:

I will start with a disclaimer—do not come with a preconceived model. If you compare an at-risk school with a Five-Star school, you develop a budget based on the needs of the student populations in each one of those buildings. That chart reflected the variable needs of a student population. This is the starting point, coordinating a student's unique needs with the types of programs that would enable the education delivery system to work effectively with that individual. This would entail developing a budget at each school. It does not end there, but that is the starting point.

Senator Ford:

How many schools are there in CCSD?

Mr. Vellardita:

Around 356.

Senator Ford:

So your suggestion is that we have 356 individual budgets, begun at each school level, that each take into consideration the student population at that school, is that correct?

Mr. Vellardita:

We currently have 356 individual budgets but they arrive from the top down and we are saying they should develop from the bottom up.

Senator Ford:

Are the principals prepared and trained to do this type of budgeting?

Mr. Vellardita:

I cannot speak for the principals, but I assume they do some budgeting now.

Senator Ford:

That would be important for us to know. Do they have the capacity and capability to begin their budgets at that level? You indicated that budgeting should involve the parents and community. What would that look like?

Mr. Vellardita:

Parents could have the opportunity to share their concerns and issues related to their child's education while also enlightened to the reality of funding and what needs to go into the proper funding levels for a student's education. Currently, parents are not part of the process, but we think they should be.

Senator Ford:

I do not disagree, but I am trying to see, practically, how it looks. Say I am a principal sitting in a school, getting ready to develop a budget that ultimately I need to present to CCSD for consideration. Do I convene a meeting with community members and say, "Let's talk about this. How much do we want to spend on ELL or any other program?" Is that what you are suggesting?

Mr. Vellardita:

What I am suggesting is that we first look at a snapshot of that student population and make an assessment of their particular needs. Then, look at the current funding stream going into that building. You would then convene a discussion with parents to frame the conversation around the budget. You could give them the baseline and get the input from parents as to what they may say about needs that are not being met, for example.

Senator Ford:

I am just trying to imagine how we would write that down in Legislation.

Mr. Vellardita:

Look at the 2012 passage of California Proposition 30. I believe there is a process where budget development starts at the school and parental input and in some cases, parental approval, has to take place when the budget is ultimately submitted for adoption.

Senator Ford:

That is helpful. I will look up that bill. My second question has to do with teacher recruitment. I get that we are in a dire situation with the teacher shortage. I thought I did hear CCSD try to make an effort to recruit teachers. It is a supply and demand issue in some sense. I understand we should be trying to get our greatest share of the teachers who are in supply, but are there suggestions you have on how to increase the supply that you think have been ignored?

Mr. Vellardita:

I am not going to speak to increasing the supply, but I will speak to the recruitment efforts. We have a systemic problem for the second year in a row. We can foresee at least 3 plus years before we can make an impact, which is what the CCSD CFO just predicted. How do you parallel your recruitment to graduating classes of teachers in higher education? Even though they are not graduating this year, are we targeting that population and tracking them in the course of their graduation? That way, when they graduate, we would have already had a 2-year conversation with them.

Senator Ford:

We heard the CCSD recruiters say today that they are doing that right now in the high schools, talking to different venues.

Mr. Vellardita:

I was referring to a national effort. You are not going to fill all the vacancies with your homegrown kids, that's for sure.

Senator Ford:

That makes sense in terms of reaching out early on nationwide.

Mr. Vellardita:

If I may add, it is telling the amount of research that goes into recruitment given the significant impact of failure or shortcoming on that process, as well as the amount of dollars that are spent, and what the return is. How much money did you put into getting that one teacher? I did not hear a model that essentially said, "We are projecting 3,000 next year and here is the model of recruitment we are going to employ—multilevel engagement, different aspects of feeding the recruitment needs, etc." I did not hear that.

Senator Ford:

Some of us would say four recruiters is not sufficient. I think they heard us loud and clear and maybe will reexamine the recruitment process. It seems to me it is a difficult task to find the right balance to allocate the funds and the personnel associated with recruiting as well as the other portions of human resources that need attention.

What portion of these requirements do you think are our responsibility as a Legislature, and what is the responsibility of the elected school board, and beyond that, the elected

State Board of Education? Why are we, who are sometimes no more knowledgeable about education and process and pedagogy, in any better position to make decisions about the best way to approach education than a State Board of Education whose sole province is education? I do not understand why this is our province instead of someone else's. Can you help me understand?

Mr. Vellardita:

In part, Superintendent Skorkowsky was spot on in that there is a burden of responsibility the Legislature should own in this process. Many great things occurred and some good programs emerged out of the last Session. Only near the end was there a discussion around the systemic crisis and teacher shortage. If that discussion had occurred earlier, we may have had a different outcome.

I am not saying the S.B. 511 bonus money is not a good investment. We supported it. We think the qualified teacher in the classroom was the missing piece in the last Session. Had that occurred, it would have changed the discussion around to how we address that, do we need more resources and if so, what resources do we need.

Regarding school board representatives, I think our elected people need to be far more informed about how a \$2.3 billion budget works and what kinds of decisions need to be made. Leadership demands taking risks. We cannot be so foolish that we are harboring the salary attrition savings and paying for things with that because we did not get enough funding from the State to pay those obligations in the fear that next year we will have 3,000 people at our door looking for a job. That is not happening.

There is a point where you take some of that one-time money, make that investment and make sure there is not a tipping point where there is exposure in the coming years that you have overspent, the baseline has gone up and now you do not have any money. I do not think we have had that discussion to really know what the number is. We would be very cooperative to understand what that number is. We would be very responsible and not put the District at risk at what we think would be a solution around the salary issue with our members.

Senator Ford:

I agree with a lot of what you say. I am ambivalent on some other things. I am just not clear that it is our province to be trying to determine what the criteria is for an effective leader at the superintendent level. That does not seem to be a Legislative mandate. If you want to talk about requirements for what it takes to be an elected school board member, maybe can see us putting into Nevada statute some level of competency regarding some of the things you have been talking about.

Mr. Vellardita:

Yes, we should talk about what some of the criteria would be for an elected school board member.

Senator Ford:

I know, I was saying that it could be a Legislative province to outline some requirements for an elected school board member, but for us to determine what it takes to be an effective superintendent would be usurping the duties of the elected body, the school board.

Chair Roberson:

Superintendent Skorkowsky, would you like to respond to any issues mentioned by Mr. Vellardita?

Mr. Skorkowsky:

In many of the concepts, we are in full agreement—autonomy and empowerment, putting the monies to the schools, letting them decide how to use it—we have many similarities. We can work through many of these issues at the school level.

In response to Senator Ford's question about the training of the principals, that is what we are doing right now. We know it needs to happen if we are going to be successful in any of these movements. Many of these things can be put in place as soon as the beginning of the next school year if we work together. I do not disagree with the concepts the CCEA presented about the school level pieces. That is where the real payoffs are going to take place at the school level.

Chair Roberson:

As a Committee, we are learning about all these CCSD issues. It is apparent you are also working on these issues at the same time. If there is a disconnect, it is not intentional. We have the challenge of implementing a reorganization plan in a limited amount of time—a year from now. We will be working with you, raising issues we are concerned with and you will tell us you are working on it. We have to come together at some point and achieve a consensus pertaining to the mandate we were given by this Legislation.

Every meeting we have something that comes up where we raise our eyebrows and ask why this is the way it is, and what can we do to fix it. I know there are those on the school board and others in the school district that do not want us to have this conversation. They do not want to see change. Well, too bad, because we are going to have this conversation. Sometimes it will be difficult for all involved, but it is the only way we will make progress.

We did put a lot of money into CCSD. Everyone on this Committee voted to put more money into the District. It is incumbent on all of us that we make sure the delivery of services to students confirms that the money is well spent and that we see good outcomes from those monies. Because if we do not see progress and good outcomes from this funding, good luck trying to get funding again from the Legislature. You know politically how difficult that will be.

Assemblywoman Diaz:

We all have a role and we all have blame and I will take mine as a Legislator for putting some of these mandates on the District and teachers that then make their plates fuller and fuller every time we legislate. What does your membership say about going to these high need urban areas with 70 percent substitute teachers and making these schools attractive to teachers? What are those teachers saying they need to move to those schools?

Mr. Villardita:

We have had some very productive discussions with Superintendent Skorkowsky on this issue. We have introduced a new salary schedule based on appropriately compensating an educator for ongoing professional learning, development, education, training, etc. Within that context we have looked at whether there should be a differential in pay if someone is teaching in an at-risk school.

Several months ago, we surveyed our teachers and asked if it was the same teaching in an at-risk school versus in the Valley. The answer was that it is definitely not the same. We think teachers who are not there now are open to going to these schools, but they are adamantly opposed to being forced there. We think certain things need to occur including adequate and appropriate compensation, great leaders in the building, a supportive administrator and appropriate resources, etc.

With all the requirements of an educator today, if you are in a spot where you do not face the challenges that may come back negatively on your performance review because you do not have a challenging student population, you would not necessarily be inclined to jump into that other building. Without a great, supporting leader and the type of resources where you can be successful, along with appropriate compensation, we think there are a number of teachers who would be attracted to those schools.

Chair Roberson:

Seeing no one wanting to make public comment, I adjourn this meeting at 6:00 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Linda Hiller, Interim Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Michael Roberson, Chair

Date: _____

Exhibit	Witness / Agency	Description
A		Agenda
B		Attendance Roster
C	Lindsey Dalley Moapa Valley Citizens Education Advisory Board	Moapa Valley Progress article, Nov. 12, 2015, <i>Garvey Tries to Disband MVCEAB over A.B. 394 Dispute</i>
D	Kelly Richard Research Division Legislative Counsel Bureau	Interim Committee Report of the Nov. 10, 2015 Technical Advisory Committee to Develop a Plan to Reorganize the Clark County School District
E	Michael Griffith Education Commission of the States	Report and Presentation: Advisory Committee to Develop a Plan to Reorganize the Clark County School District
F	Victoria Carreón Guinn Center for Policy Priorities	Issues to Address in the Reorganization of the Clark County School District
G	Victoria Carreón Guinn Center for Policy Priorities	Breaking Up Is Hard To Do: Issues to Address in the Reorganization of the Clark County School District
H	Staci Vesneske, Chief Human Resources Officer, Clark County School District	Report and Presentation: Teacher Production & CCSD Human Resources Update
I	Jim McIntosh Chief Financial Officer Clark County School District	Report and Presentation: Equity of Funding Distribution
J	Vikki Courtney President, Clark County Education Association	Survey of Teachers

K	Vikki Courtney President, Clark County Education Association; John Vellardita, Executive Director, Clark County Education Association	Presentation to the Technical Advisory Committee to Develop a Plan to Reorganize the Clark County School District.
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