

THE SECOND DAY

CARSON CITY (Thursday) July 9, 2020

Senate called to order at 9:31 a.m.

President Marshall presiding.

Roll called.

All present.

Prayer by Senator Joseph Hardy.

Dear Father of us all, we thank Thee for our health and protection coming here to Carson City. We are grateful for the trust that our constituents have placed in us, as we humbly approach Thee in prayer.

The problems we face were known by Thee before they occurred. We have hope and faith that Thou, who knowest the future, can show us mercifully how to deal with these challenges. We ask humbly to help us find ways to help, lift and give hope to so many who are anxious, afraid, depressed or unjustly persecuted. We plead for literal blessings of answers to our collective and individual prayers.

We are weak, and Thou are mighty. Please help us give hope to the hopeless.

Sincerely, as elected, appointed and State employees, we pray that we may be saved by and through the Name and power of our Savior and Thy Son.

AMEN.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

By previous order of the Senate, the reading of the Journal is dispensed with, and the President and Secretary are authorized to make the necessary corrections and additions.

MOTIONS, RESOLUTIONS AND NOTICES

Senator Cannizzaro moved that the following persons be accepted as accredited press representatives, and that they be allowed the use of appropriate media facilities: KOLO-TV: Gurajpal Sangha; KTNV LAS VEGAS: Rudy Garcia; KTNV-TV, 13 ACTION NEWS: Joe Bartels.

Motion carried.

INTRODUCTION, FIRST READING AND REFERENCE

At 9:39 a.m.

By the Committee of the Whole:

Senate Bill No. 3—AN ACT relating to governmental financial administration; temporarily accelerating the collection of the tax upon the net proceeds of minerals; temporarily requiring persons who extract minerals to pay the tax on the net proceeds of the estimated royalties that will be paid for certain years; temporarily altering the allocation of a portion of the proceeds of the basic governmental services tax; requiring the Department of Taxation to allow for the payment of delinquent taxes, fees or assessments without a penalty for a limited period in certain circumstances; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Senator Cannizzaro moved that the bill be referred to the Committee of the Whole.

Motion carried.

MOTIONS, RESOLUTIONS AND NOTICES

Senator Cannizzaro moved that the Senate resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering other matters relating to the State's budget shortfall, with Senator Cannizzaro as Chair and Senator Ratti as Vice Chair.

Motion carried.

IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

At 9:39 a.m.

Senator Cannizzaro presiding.

State's budget shortfall considered.

The Committee of the Whole was addressed by Kumud Acharya, Ph.D., President, Desert Research Institute; Adam Barrington; Michelle Booth, Educate Nevada Now; Keegan Bosier; Senator Brooks; Jared Busker, Associate Director, Children's Advocacy Alliance; Alex Bybee; Senator Cancela; Senator Cannizzaro; Andrew Clinger, Chief Financial Officer, Nevada System of Higher Education; Chris Daly, Nevada State Education Association; Trey Delap, Executive Director, Nevada Center for Civic Engagement; Senator Denis; Senator Dondero Loop; Stephanie Dube; Michael Duff; Eviana Duveer; Jhone Ebert, State Superintendent, Public Instruction, Nevada Department of Education; Ken Edmonds; Rebecca Feiden, Executive Director, Nevada State Public Charter School Authority; Jim Frazee; Rebecca Garcia, President, Nevada Parent Teacher Association; Senator Goicoechea; Felicia Gonzales, Deputy State Superintendent, Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement, Nevada Department of Education; Valeraa Gurr, State Director, Nevada School Choice Coalition; Heidi Haartz, Deputy State Superintendent, Business and Support Services; Senator Hammond; Senator Hansen; Senator Hardy; Senator D. Harris; Cory Harwell; Joyce Helens, Ph.D., President, Great Basin College; Karin Hilgersom, Ph.D., President, Truckee Meadows Community College; Jesus Jara, Ph.D., Superintendent, Clark County School District; Marc Johnson, Ph.D., President, University of Nevada, Reno; Lackyn Kelley; Senator Kieckhefer; Sonia Kretschmer; Selena La Rue; Sylvia Lazos; Brody Leiser, Principal Deputy Fiscal Analyst, Legislative Counsel Bureau; Dexter Lim; Alexander Marks, Nevada State Education Association; Dora Martinez; Carisa Matthews; Kristen McNeill, Ph.D., Superintendent, Washoe County School District; Marta Meana, Ph.D., President, University of Nevada, Las Vegas; Vera Miller; Taha Mokaddem; Jonathan Moore, Ph.D., Deputy State Superintendent, Student Achievement; Laura Naumann; Caryn Neidhold; Marie Neisess, President, Clark County Education Association; Senator Ohrenschall; Senator Parks; Ward Patrick, Administrator, State Public Works

Division, Department of Administration; Senator Pickard; Jana Pleggenkuhle; Thom Reilly, Chancellor, Nevada System of Higher Education; Wislet Rouzard; Heike Ruedenauer; Christine Saunders, Policy Director, Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada; Senator Scheible; Senator Seevers Gansert; Senator Settelmeier; Caryne Shea, Hope for Nevada; Vickie Shields, Ph.D., Executive Vice President, Nevada State College; Vince Solis, Ph.D., President, Western Nevada College; Senator Spearman; Summer Stephens, Ph.D., Superintendent, Churchill County School District, Vice President, Nevada Association of School Superintendents; Autumn Tampa; Alonzo Thornton; Clinton Toledo; William Toledo; Patricia Unruh; John Vellardita, Executive Director, Clark County Education Association; Senator Washington; Sonja Whitten; Yvette Williams, Chair, Clark County Black Caucus; Senator Woodhouse; Nancy Woolf; Federico Zaragoza, Ph.D., President, College of Southern Nevada; Joshua Zerbel.

SENATOR CANNIZZARO:

We will open the hearing on matters relating to the State's budget shortfall.

JHONE EBERT (State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Nevada Department of Education):

The difficult decisions you will make this Special Session are a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic and our commitment to keeping the loss of life in Nevada as low as possible. The Nevada Department of Education (NDE) was asked to identify \$183 million in reductions for Fiscal Year 2020-2021. Last Session, you passed Senate Bill 543, which created a pupil-centered funding plan. The goal of that bill was to increase equity, access and transparency in our funding model and bring it in line with the realities of what today's students need. During the 2021 Session, we plan to pave a path toward a brighter future for Nevada's children. The reality is that today's students need more, not less. We can create a brighter future. Reduced funding means we will have to think, spend and plan differently than ever before. We need to leverage our collective capacity and resources to do what is best for students and educators in both the short- and long-term.

You will hear from three superintendents who represent our 17 school districts and the State Public Charter School Authority. Today, we have Dr. Summer Stephens, Superintendent of Churchill County School District; Dr. Jesus Jara, Superintendent of Clark County School District; and Dr. Kristen McNeill, Superintendent of Washoe County School District. We also have Rebecca Feiden, Executive Director of the Nevada State Public Charter School Authority. They have struggled through conversations, listened and collaborated with each other to make difficult recommendations due to the circumstances caused by COVID-19.

At the beginning of NDE's experience with COVID-19, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) reached out to us to collaborate on guidance for school administrators and nurses regarding hygiene, cleaning and responding to local cases. At that time, we had no idea there would be school closures across the entire State and globe. The first guidance regarding COVID-19 was distributed to school districts on February 13. A month later, on March 15, the Governor, the school superintendents and I were discussing options for a statewide closure of school buildings. The health and safety of students, staff and communities were top priority.

The Department of Education immediately put in place a flexible approach allowing districts to offer emergency programs of distance education. The guidelines were partially based on existing regulations around distance education, which we were fortunate enough to already have in place. Given the urgency of this situation, we were sensitive to what was feasible. We worked with the Governor and the United States Department of Education to secure waivers on assessments and accountability and to ensure high school seniors were able to earn their diplomas without unnecessary burdens. We heard from district and school leaders, school board members, parents and others. They said if there was not a way to ensure equity in distance education for all learners, we should not even bother trying. That was not an option for the students and families

relying upon us for opportunities to continue learning. Once announced that students in Nevada would not be returning to school buildings for the 2019-2020 school year, we knew we had to increase our efforts to strengthen our delivery of distance education, and we needed to promote equitable access for all learners. Through the Governor's emergency directive, we had already expanded the definition of distance education to include paper correspondence so students without access to the Internet or devices still had a way to learn.

We knew distance learning would require additional support for educators, students and families. In response to COVID-19, the initiatives we have launched include access to the Digital Learning Collaborative website. This site makes high-quality teaching, learning resources and professional development rapidly available to educators. The site also provides support and resources for students and families on how to approach virtual learning. The Digital Learning Collaborative led to the Digital Engineers. These are educators talented in implementing distance education. The initial cohort represents six county school districts, the State Public Charter School Authority and private schools. Among their responsibilities are creating and providing resources and professional development to support the delivery of distance learning.

We also collaborated with the Nevada State Library, Archives and Public Records Division, local libraries and Renaissance Learning to support reading for all students through access to the Renaissance Learning program *myON*. This program provides digital literacy resources for grades pre-K through 12 at no cost to students. Through *myON*, students can access a library of thousands of digital books and age-appropriate news articles based on their reading level and preferences. We have been working alongside Director Brian Mitchell of the Governor's Office of Science, Innovation and Technology to develop strategies to support schools and districts in continuing to expand access to the Internet and devices across our State.

In the midst of this challenging time for students, families and educators, our State is facing economic hardship. That is what brings us together for this Special Session. As leaders, the task before us is to make the best of an extremely difficult situation. Once it was clear budget reductions would be necessary, I worked in close partnership with all of the 17 school superintendents and the State Public Charter School Authority to identify and prioritize these recommendations. We focused on limiting impact and promoting equity to whatever extent possible.

We began by identifying and reverting unspent funds from Fiscal Year 2020. Recognizing the significant work required to provide continuity of education, we wanted to preserve the capacity of the Department. We preserved existing positions by holding open vacant positions funded by the State. To reduce the State impact, we shifted State-funded positions to other funding sources when possible.

Finally, we cut the budget for travel, which hinders our already strained capacity to provide necessary, on-site support to students and educators.

Given how the pandemic has illustrated how quickly circumstances can change from day to day, we wanted to maximize flexibility. Based on feedback from district administrators, we protected the basic-support guarantee of the Distributive School Account (DSA) payment. We focused on grant-funded programs. This was strategic in nature. If we had cut the DSA and maintained grant funding, limits on how grant funds can be used would be an obstacle. By reducing funds on certain grants and maintaining the DSA, districts and schools will have the flexibility to back-fill grant-funded programs most effective for their students and educators.

Because federal funding under the CARES Act does not have a supplement or supplant clause, districts have the flexibility to use those CARES Act dollars as they see fit to support current and future needs. We recommended reductions to new grant funds appropriated in the 2019 Legislative Session. This way, a base-funding amount from previous years would be maintained. With feedback from our district leaders, additional reductions were proposed on an as-needed basis.

You have the details regarding reductions for Fiscal Year 2020-2021. We tried to make the best of the hand we were dealt. Reductions to certain programs or aspects of our work do not mean we are any less committed to the intent of those programs. It means we will need to find alternative approaches to supporting students and educators.

While District Superintendents shared their priorities to protect the DSA fund, they also identified opportunities for reversions of unspent funds. They indicated Class Size Reduction as

an area where funding could be back-filled as necessary. Much like the Governor's difficult recommendation of 12 days of furlough for each State employee and the suspension of pay raises rather than layoffs, we proposed reducing Teacher Incentive Funding. This allows districts and schools to focus on retaining and supporting all educators equitably, rather than providing additional incentive funding to certain groups of educators.

We recommended a reduction of \$31 million, which would have supported literacy specialists, to the Read by Grade 3 program funding. Given the critical shortage of educators in Nevada, districts recommended we eliminate the positions of Literacy Specialists. This will allow those licensed and highly qualified educators to fill vacancies in classrooms where they are sorely needed. The Department will continue to provide support and will maintain its partnership with the Northwest Evaluation Association to support all elementary educators across the State in early literacy.

Approximately, \$2.7 million for School Resource Officers and social workers were identified for savings. These dollars supported positions for which districts were unable to find qualified staff. They do not represent any layoffs for these positions.

We have proposed a reduction of \$6 million in aid to pre-K programs. We intend to back-fill this with a portion of the money available through the Governor's Education Emergency Relief fund. We all recognize the critical nature of early education. State-funded pre-K serves students from families with incomes lower than 200 percent of the federal poverty-level guidelines. Currently, Nevada Ready Pre-K serves only 11 percent of eligible students statewide. The backfilling pre-K funding will maintain access to early learning services for our neediest students and families.

In support of promoting equity for diverse learners, we recommend maintaining funding for Zoom and Victory grants, Gifted and Talented Education and special education services for our differently abled students. In order to meet our targets, we were forced to recommend reductions of \$70 million to the New Nevada Education funding, often referred to as Senate Bill 178 of the 79th Session.

In the midst of these difficult decisions and tough conversations, the Department has been listening to the needs of families, students and educators across the State. In consultation with the State Board of Education, we identified seven key priorities for our COVID-19 response. These priorities lay the foundation for our next steps. The first is a safe, efficient and equitable reopening of our school buildings. The remaining priorities are support for parents, families and communities including social and emotional support for students and our educators. Access to high-quality professional development and high-quality instructional materials are important along with the technological capacity for our educators, students and families, adult education and workforce development opportunities. These priorities will guide the awarding of any competitive funding in the short-term.

As part of the CARES Act funding, Nevada received \$117 million from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER). This funding provides districts and charter schools with emergency-relief funds to address the impact of COVID-19. Those dollars are available to school districts today. Federal guidance requires we allocate 90 percent of ESSER funds to districts and charter schools using Title I methodology for Fiscal Year 2019. This amounts to approximately \$105 million. The Eureka County School District is the only district that does not receive ESSER allocation funds because they currently do not receive any Title I, Part A funding.

The NDE recently released the request for applications for the 10-percent set aside of the ESSER application for statewide. That is approximately \$11 million. This is a funding opportunity for eligible entities to apply for funds to support high-quality professional development, high-quality instructional materials and wraparound services to support students, families and communities in the wake of COVID-19. These funds must be expended by September 30, 2022. Districts and charter schools have significant flexibility in the use of these funds including educational technology and connectivity, summer learning and afterschool activities, addressing the needs of diverse learners, social-emotional learning and support and professional learning for our educators.

In addition, under the CARES Act, the State of Nevada and the Governor received over \$26 million for the Governor's Emergency Education Relief fund. These funds are to support

educational institutions with emergency assistance in response to COVID-19. Under the leadership of the Governor, the Department anticipates allocating \$9.4 million to support school districts and charter schools in purchasing devices and connectivity. There is \$4.6 million to support the Nevada Ready Pre-K, \$4.6 million to support implementation of a statewide learning-management system, \$2.2 million to support high-quality digital content across the State and \$5 million in support of the Nevada Educator Corps.

We will continue to work closely with the Governor's Office, districts and school leaders to assess and respond to emerging needs. Many now refer to COVID-19 as the new normal. We need to recognize this is not normal. It is not normal for us to not be able to hug our grandparents. It is not normal that I am speaking to you remotely rather than being in Chamber where I can see your faces and read your body language. It is not normal that public education is supposed to be the great equalizer but now contributes to greater gaps between students because of a problem that is, in many ways, outside of our control. It is the digital divide. We need to get comfortable with this discomfort because we do not know when it will end.

I have been asking my team at NDE to focus on what is possible and what is absolutely necessary. At this moment, we need to promote equity for every child. What is possible? We have created an urgency for telecommunication providers to expand affordable access to families in need. That is one example of business partners being more motivated than ever to contribute to the future of education. We can find areas of opportunity in which to create flexibility in our policies and change how we think about accountability. For example, I have long been a proponent of competency-based education. We need to take advantage of this moment to implement new approaches in teaching and learning that will better prepare our students for their life-long success.

What is necessary? We need to provide our educators with access to professional learning experiences that can immediately be applied to their practices. They need just-in-time learning so they can adapt alongside their students. We need to engage our families consistently and in new ways. We cannot just inform them, we need to involve them. Parents are not replacements for educators, last spring they were our eyes and ears. If we expect parents to communicate with us, we need to invite them into our work early and often.

Amidst this public-health crisis, which created our current economic crisis, we are also having a national conversation about race and equity. It is our job as educators to turn this into a teachable moment for our students and to lead. We need to fight for equity. We need to celebrate our diversity, and we need to lead with love. Focusing on equity means we do not refer to achievement gaps, we talk about opportunity gaps. Opportunity gaps refer to the ways race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, English proficiency or other factors contribute to lower educational aspirations, achievement and attainment for certain students. In today's circumstances, we are not talking about a loss of learning for our students during school-building closures but rather the need for additional support. Our students have not lost anything. They were not given the opportunity and tools to learn. We recognize and must address the fact that not every student has the same access to at-home support or the means like reliable food sources or stable housing. In distance education that includes a lack of access to the Internet or to devices that can be used for learning.

Some of this is about language and language matters. Our children and their families are listening. We need to lead the way and be mindful of how we tell the story of this moment and the opportunity it provides. The story of our response to COVID-19 could easily be about what we sacrificed and what went wrong. I do not want to minimize the tragic losses many families have faced. At the same time, this is a turning point in education. It is time to focus on what is suddenly possible for the future. If we do not stand up in this moment of uncertainty and light the way with innovative changes that expand equity and inclusivity, then we are selling ourselves, and our students short.

SUMMER STEPHENS, PH.D. (Superintendent, Churchill County School District; Vice President, Nevada Association of School Superintendents):

This Association is comprised of all 17 school districts, and meetings are held on a monthly basis. The meetings are also attended by the State Charter Authority. Since the events that began in March of this year, our group has met at least once a week, if not more often, to collectively

address issues regarding the closures, the financial impact and other pressing issues across the State.

We want to ensure you understand where we stand on the reductions being presented today. The plan presented is one our entire group of Superintendents and the State Charter School Authority developed collaboratively alongside NDE and Superintendent Ebert and her team. This work, which occurred as part of the ongoing collaborative during the closure, was taken seriously by the school districts. On more than one occasion, the collective group has confirmed their support of this plan. As Superintendent Ebert mentioned, at this time, it is the best plan under these horrible circumstances.

The decisions made through the process included working with the group as a whole and with NDE to review what was being considered. We each heard from our district staff regarding concerns, insights related to the proposed cuts and the impact we would individually face as districts. This same process was used in the spring with the same group to work on the terms of reversions to cover the shortage in Fiscal Year 2020. In that instance, we worked together as a team to bridge the gap.

District leaders in this State have had to make difficult choices. Many of you worked tirelessly to bring programs to life, and now you may see them in the proposed cuts. They are valuable programs; we agree with that. They have helped students in Nevada significantly. In this time of severe financial constraints, the Superintendents and Charter School Authority have had to be strategic in their reductions to ensure we have funds available for the 2020-2021 school year, and at best, we can provide for every child in Nevada. We look forward to finding ways in the future to, once again, build up our financial opportunities so these programs can return and are able to provide the numerous experiences to children these programs were supporting. We see these cuts as temporary and want to reinstate the full budget as soon as possible. More importantly, once decisions are made, we want to continue to work on our budgets locally so we can use the funds we have to ensure students impacted by these program cuts are prioritized at the top of our list.

For district leaders and boards of trustees, flexibility is the key. We must be agile and able to pivot quickly in these times. Districts have varying needs, and by keeping the DSA whole, we will be allowed to meet the needs of every district. As a result of keeping the per-pupil funding whole, local control of how DSA funds are spent will remain. That is important to our boards of trustees, parents, staffs and students. It ensures our locally-elected school boards have a key voice in our community schools. We understand the K-12 education budget is a significant portion of the State's entire budget. We ask you to consider keeping K-12 education as close to whole as possible. Although our children are only 24 percent of our population, they are 100 percent of our future. We cannot afford to provide anything less than a fully adequate, amazing education.

JESUS JARA, PH.D. (Superintendent, Clark County School District):

I am here representing 320,000 students, 42,000 employees, the fifth largest school district in the Country and the fourth rural district in the State of Nevada. I thank the State Superintendent and my fellow Superintendents across the State for working through these budget difficulties as a cohesive group.

This State is in one of the worst economic situations in its history. I wish this was a time to meet and discuss how to provide more resources for our students, but I understand the economic realities. Any cuts will negatively impact our children. The overall plan presented today is the least-damaging option given required cuts have to be made throughout the State. We can all agree we wish these cuts were not necessary. The funding for education is already challenging. I am proud of our Board of Trustees, my executive team, our finance department and our building principals. Prior to COVID-19, for the first time in over ten years, Clark County School District (CCSD) was prepared to approve a balanced budget for Fiscal Year 2020-2021 with no additional cuts required. No one in CCSD wants to cut education funding.

I appreciate there have been no cuts to the DSA. Clark County School District has been disproportionately underfunded over the past few decades. Keeping DSA fully funded in these challenging times will help districts throughout the State manage the cuts with greater flexibility. It will allow options to address the needs of students within each school district. As we look at our data, the children in Clark County, who represent 70 percent of those in the State, have been under-resourced for decades. Our educators have been struggling to provide a quality education

for all students due to the lack of equitable funding. Now, COVID-19 has exploited the inequities we already knew existed in our schools. I appreciate the State Superintendent for Public Instruction highlighting the pupil-centered funding formula as one of the goals to improve equity and access for all students, especially our children in Clark County.

The cuts in Senate Bill No. 178 of the 79th Session will be challenging for our school system, especially given the significance of the funding amount here in Clark County. This funding is provided to support our most vulnerable students across the district. The budget plan presented to you today provides us local flexibility, locally, to support programs like this through our General Operating Fund. Originally, we planned to use our ESSER dollars to provide funding to schools losing Senate Bill No. 178 of the 79th Session funds. The greater need to implement a comprehensive, distance-education program under Nevada's path forward has required us to reallocate funding so schools can reopen in the fall with the tools required to do so safely for our students and teachers.

Another significant cut for CCSD is the Read by Grade 3 program. We budgeted for approximately 160 in-school positions in the 2020-2021 school year budget to help ensure students are reading proficiently by third grade. Although we will not have the funding to continue this great program, we will work to ensure that as many literacy specialists are in place in our classrooms as licensed educators. As we move forward in these difficult times, we will continue to look at how we can support many of the programs discussed today given our limited resources, as they have proven to be beneficial for our children. Once this Special Session ends, if additional revenues are realized, any additional infusion of dollars to K-12 education would go a long way to help ease the loss of these programs and services provided.

KRISTEN MCNEILL, PH.D. (Superintendent, Washoe County School District):

The Washoe County School District serves over 64,000 students and their families alongside our 8,000 dedicated employees. I thank the Governor and Superintendent Ebert for partnering with us during this pandemic to find ways to keep students and staff safe and to ensure our students are getting access to greatly-needed learning materials.

I am new to this position and had hoped to address the Legislature under different circumstances. These are difficult times, and I take no pleasure in supporting the proposals in front of you. Along with my fellow Superintendents, I agree this is the best way to address a terrible situation. I thank our Governor for proposing a plan that does not affect DSA. This will make it possible to protect against job losses and keep our dedicated teachers, principals and staff working with our students.

I would like to add insight into the proposed cuts to class-size reduction. As a former teacher and principal, I can tell you, without a doubt, class size does matter. Being able to provide individualized instruction and support students is impossible with too many students in the classroom. Our primary grades will easily absorb the reductions because our class sizes there are now less than 20. In the Washoe County School District, we hope to use our ESSER funds to provide necessary and additional academic support for our students whether it is through additional access to technology, PPE for students and staff or individualized academic support that makes sense in a COVID-19 world.

We need flexibility to support our students in a setting that makes sense based on this pandemic. That could be in a physical setting, with proper safety measures in place, or remotely. Our Board of Trustees, leadership team and our large reopening taskforce have been working around the clock to find ways to continue to meet the needs of all of our students. The Board of Trustees met late into the evening on Tuesday to consider reopening options. They are receiving a lot of public input. They made difficult decisions about how to open schools in August while adhering to guidelines around social distancing, face coverings and the supplies to keep schools clean. All of these modifications have costs associated with them and will require resources and flexibility for our system to comply.

I wish there were a time when we could invest more resources in our students, but the reality is that is not currently an option. We appreciate the Governor's fiscal plan that prioritizes restoration of funding for K-12 education if additional revenues or federal assistance is made available. To be able to use that money, we would hope to receive word before the start of our second semester. Ultimately, we hope that when the financial resources are available, we can

make up for these temporary reductions and ensure this generation of students graduate from our high schools prepared with the tools to succeed as Nevadans.

REBECCA FEIDEN (Executive Director, Nevada State Public Charter School Authority):

I want to echo the sentiments of my colleagues and share my thanks to all of the District Superintendents and the Department of Education (DOE). The State Public Charter School Authority is committed to supporting our schools, the students and families they serve through the unprecedented challenge the COVID-19 pandemic has brought to our State and Nation. This has required rapid and significant change to our agency's daily activities. These include frequent calls with our school leaders to convey critical information and answer questions with regular, one-on-one check-ins with all 60 of our school leaders to understand pressing challenges and needs. This work has been different and challenging, but we are confident our schools have upheld the requirements set forth by the Governor and the DOE. They have upheld their commitment and promises to their students and families.

Today, as you consider potential cuts to K-12 funding, I will provide context regarding the potential impact of those cuts to our State's charter schools. Charter schools are funded through the same formula as our school districts. They receive per-pupil allocations based on the county in which their students reside. For that reason, many of the impacts of cuts on our charter schools are similar to their district counterparts. Each charter school, however, is also unique. Schools can vary greatly from one to the next in terms of programming, student population, geography and, ultimately, their budgets and expenditures. The specific impact of these cuts will vary from school to school, but there are commonalities that transcend these differences.

In anticipation of potential cuts, public charter schools have prepared multiple budget scenarios for the 2020-2021 school year. Since April, we have repeatedly asked our schools to be prepared for decreases in revenue. While board-approved budgets were due to NDE on June 8, we asked all schools to have alternative budget scenarios prepared. We know our schools have worked hard to incorporate their families and communities in planning for this fall. They have worked to ensure they can maintain staff even if there are substantial budget cuts.

The lack of concrete information about those budget cuts has made planning for the upcoming school year challenging. Many of our schools have had to defer critical decisions as they wait for additional information. For example, we have three schools with State-funded pre-K programs that serve approximately 160 students. The pre-K grant is specific and funds those programs entirely. Schools are eager for information so they can determine how to proceed and how they can continue to serve their students.

Our school leaders have expressed concern about cuts to the categorical funding dedicated to serving historically underserved student populations. This includes our Zoom and Victory programs. Serving these children and closing historical opportunity gaps require more resources. Cuts to these programs could severely hinder those efforts.

School leaders believe protecting DSA should be a priority. Some of our schools that have a high population of English learners and students qualifying for free and reduced lunch express hesitation to this approach if programs like Zoom and Victory are cut. They emphasized that budget cuts should not disproportionately impact students most in need of support and resources. The efforts to maintain the DSA and protect many of these crucial programs by DOE, District Superintendents and the Governor's Office are in line with what we understand to be the priorities of charter schools as they work to meet the needs of their students.

The proposed cuts will not be easy for our schools and their communities. Many of our schools rely on programs like Read by Grade 3 and the New Nevada Education Plan. They will face difficult decisions about how to continue these meaningful programs for students. We understand the difficult position in which our State finds itself. Due to the efforts of our schools to prepare for potential cuts this fall, we expect they will, in large, be able to absorb these cuts without substantial reductions to programming. We also understand further cuts will become increasingly difficult to bear. Each of our schools is unique, and there is variation in how cuts will affect their programming and students.

SENATOR WOODHOUSE:

Superintendent Ebert, in working with the Superintendents and your staff preparing the reductions you needed to give to the Governor's Office, would you share with us the parameters and the priorities you used to determine these reductions across K-12 education programs.

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

We started with Fiscal Year 2020 and looked at those components. The pandemic created some automatic cost savings, such as preplanned events for professional development. The school district, as well as the Department, performed a line-by-line analysis for cost savings in Fiscal Year 2020. The DSA, with a class-size reduction, readily available, is \$12 million from reversions. This was the first piece in looking at all of this work.

After that, we spent months, gathered everyone together, had difficult conversations and made difficult decisions of what the reductions should be. No one wants any reductions. Creating flexibility in the available funding was essential, as was consideration of where CARES dollars could continue programming and support individual school levels. As noted by Dr. Summer Stephens, the effect on some of these dollars, even though programmatically the intent is the same, school districts with either additional federal funding or the way they configure and implement these programs is key. It is a high-level process to make these determinations in order to meet our \$183-million mark.

SENATOR WOODHOUSE:

Thank you very much. I know we all understand these reduction cuts are devastating to K-12 education, and most importantly, they are devastating to our students in our schools. I appreciate your response.

SENATOR DENIS:

Superintendents, thank you for all of the work you have put together. I think it is amazing that you are able to work together with the districts and others to try and come up with something in these difficult times. We have to make these decisions, as we have had to do before with the last economic downturn. Those cuts took so long to recover.

My concern is that we cut disproportionately and affect students who need more work. Are we looking at expected achievement tied with the fact some of these programs will be cut, or are they getting reduced funding? Can you talk about those thought processes? Are we maintaining the same standard as if they had full funding?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

The goals in education have not changed. We need to think differently about how we do our work. Superintendents have dedicated much time working with their school boards and educators. It is not a matter of doing more with less. Our teachers, educators and support staff work extremely hard and work long hours. So, how do we do our business differently and maintain our expectations during this time? When you add the expertise of an educator, the expectations we want from our students and the benefit of technology, we can meet students where they are. We have accelerated all of those components coming together on a short timeline. Nevada is ready to move in that direction.

SENATOR DENIS:

My concern is there are many new things teachers will face and be challenged with to accomplish. I hope as we move forward, we can find ways to do things better. As more funding becomes available in the future, we will truly get to the level we need to be.

SENATOR OHRENSCHALL:

The New Nevada Education Funding plan comes from Senate Bill No. 178 of the 79th Session. My colleagues, the Senators from Districts 2 and 5, Assemblywoman from District 11, along with our late colleague, former Assemblyman Thompson, all cosponsored Senate Bill No. 178 of the 79th Session to ensure more equity in our funding system for English learners and kids in challenged schools. If this is eliminated, is there a way to still help these kids who are benefiting from Senate Bill No. 178 of the 79th Session?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

Thank you for recognizing all of your colleagues who supported Senate Bill No. 178 of the 79th Session. You are right to ask all of our leaders about this devastating reduction and how it will play out in the school districts, starting with Dr. Jara.

DR. JARA:

One of the things we are planning is a budget task force with our building principals. Once we get a final budget number from the State and the Legislature, we are going to pull everyone in and have a conversation around addressing our general operating budget. Funding for Senate Bill No. 178 of the 79th Session is critical for our children. As a school system, this will be one of our priorities, and there are some ways to do that. I am going to rely on the leadership of building principals to ensure we provide immediate support. When we ran through the process, some requirements would go away with some of the grant funding. We appreciate the flexibility as a school system. As a Superintendent, we are committed to do the right thing for our most vulnerable students.

DR. STEPHENS:

In Churchill County, we have been working hard to incorporate grants to meet our goals and figure out what to stop doing and incorporate the best practices learned from the grant opportunities. We have been working to embed the supports for our learners we need at the General Fund level. Not quite there yet, but we are going to prioritize once we know the actual cuts and where we stand on funding. We can prioritize and ensure our kids who are at risk and need the most support that we will provide the most we can with the scale and upper options we have with the funds available.

DR. MCNEILL:

I concur with all of my colleagues as far as the possible loss of Senate Bill No. 178 of the 79th Session funding. We are ready to get our budget figures to reassess what Washoe County's situation would look like. Most of that funding was for intervention strategies used for stipends, after-school activities and interventions during the day. Although we did not have many positions within Senate Bill No. 178 of the 79th Session, those intervention strategies are important to ensure our students reach their academic progress.

SENATOR OHRENSCHALL:

I appreciate your answers and everything you are trying to do to help these children. I hate seeing these budget cuts being made.

SENATOR HARDY:

Dr. Jara, I may have heard, or misheard, 160 positions with Read by Grade 3 and then trying to find places for them in classrooms and redefine them as educators. How does that work? Does that have anything to do with the Rainy Day Fund that the local schools have had of unspent local funding? Obviously, they would like to continue being rewarded for their foresight. I guess it is a multiphase question.

DR. JARA:

The 160 positions we had allocated under Read by Grade 3 is working with our grade principals in our schools to determine what money they have, and my Chief Financial Officer has guaranteed our principals there is money to utilize to not only balance their budgets but also serve their communities. Our goal is to work with them and keep them in their positions. How will they fund them through their budgeting process with their organizational teams? Or, they can help us fill vacancies in our schools. It has been a challenge to fill all of our vacancies, so they will have jobs as educators. That may be misquoted. They are educators and licensed. They could go into a classroom. They can stay at their school, and their school can fund them with their organization.

SENATOR HARDY:

Your intention is to not take away the local funding they have been saving for this rainy-day situation.

DR. JARA:

We certainly will continue to follow the law and NRS 388G. That has never been the intent from my office or from my Chief Financial Officer. We have communicated that to our school building principals. I have full confidence in them to work with the rest if they choose to do that.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

I know some of the Superintendents talked about ESSER money. Could you isolate that information out and each one of you tell us what you plan to do with that money when you receive it?

DR. STEPHENS:

In Churchill County, we are receiving over \$500,000 of ESSER money of our local amount. We are awaiting the outcome of these proceedings to see what the budget looks like. Our first intention and primary focus is to use the funds to backfill teaching positions that will be cut out of potential cuts such as Read by Grade 3 and Senate Bill No. 178 of the 79th Session funds. Then we will look to apply for "competitive" funds. Maybe that is not the right word, but the available funds out of the \$11 million. We are fortunate in Churchill County. One of our priorities has been purchasing and utilizing devices for connectivity.

In our district, we have approximately 3,500 students that have one-to-one devices. We are looking at the purchase of at least 3,500 devices, plus replacement devices, to get them up to speed. Some of their ESSER funds could be used for the purchase of technology.

DR. JARA:

Currently, our budget-proposal projections for reopening require the purchase of additional Chromebooks. We need about 96,000 Chromebooks costing \$28 million. We also need software for Chromebooks for loss and theft at \$1.7 million and learning management-support licenses at \$1.4 million. Professional learning for our educators is \$3 million. Substitute costs and professional employees instructional-material resources are at \$10 million. We are looking at around \$1 million for the Nevada Learning Academy to support our teachers in creating content for elementary staff. We also need PPE, such as masks, for our students and employees to the tune of around \$50 million. We have additional costs in transportation and cleaning supplies. Those costs will come from FEMA funding or out of our General Fund.

The costs we have are higher than the \$84 million we are projecting to receive from the federal government, so tough decisions need to be made. We are prioritizing equity to make sure all children succeed. Our connectivity and access to technology have been exploited by COVID. We have some tough decisions to make and difficult priorities to determine. As we move forward to, hopefully, opening up our schools in the fall. This evening we will have that conversation with our Board of Trustees.

DR. MCNEILL:

Washoe County is receiving approximately \$9 million in ESSER funding. We have prioritized that around PPE which includes facial coverings, hand sanitizer and cleaning supplies for all of our schools. We have also ordered approximately 3,500 Wi-Fi hotspots. We have approximately 4,000 students who currently do not have a device in their home. We have made ordering these devices using our ESSER funding a priority and will use any additional ESSER funding for academic and instructional support in the area of curriculum.

MS. FEIDEN:

The State Public Charter School Authority received approximately \$4 million in ESSER funds. The majority of those funds were allocated directly to our schools on a per-pupil basis with a slight weighting for students who qualify for the free or reduced-price lunch program. We additionally reserved a small portion of the dollars that may be allocated to fill specific grant gaps that may be created by budget cuts. As an example, we were particularly concerned about the pre-K grant, and we reserved funds that may directly be allocated to fill in gaps created by budget cuts. If we do not use the funds for this, they will be allocated to our schools on a per-pupil basis.

Our schools are using these funds for a variety of purposes. Many have already allocated some of the funds to previous costs, such as technology, associated with the initial shutdown. They are

looking at additional costs over the 2021 school year to serve students, particularly those with additional needs. These may include counselors and additional staffing to support students.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

Have any of you received outside community or business donations to help defray some of the costs with the technology we need?

DR. MCNEIL:

Our nonprofits, as well as the Education Alliance, have helped us receive donations of computers. Our hotels, casinos and casino owners, especially the Caranos, have donated thousands of keyboards. The nonprofits in our community have stepped up to help us acquire additional devices. Charter and AT&T have helped us with connectivity issues and have offered lower-cost Internet services to our families.

DR. JARA:

We have received through the Public Ed Foundation donations that have come in from not only the business community but also from municipalities.

DR. STEPHENS:

In Churchill County, we have had great support from our city in providing us with hotspots for our students. Our local telecommunications company provided free Internet during the spring closure to approximately 75 households. The concern moving forward is it will not be sustained for the long term, which is one of our considerations. In the regular, normal time of life, we use many community-based hotspots. At that time, we could encourage kids to go to the library or have people access things in their neighborhood parks where we have Wi-Fi. This is not the time to send people out to gather in other locations. That is what we are thinking about moving forward continuing the partnerships. Our county has been very gracious in looking at their CARES dollars to potentially create more countywide wireless-access connectivity. Our partnership at this time relates to technology.

MS. FEIDEN:

We did not directly receive any donations of that type although our schools may have. Part of our work has been to ensure access to some of the offerings Court Appointed Social Advocates has provided to low-income families. We have worked to ensure that information is accessible and coordinated our schools to have access to that offering as well.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

Thank you for your leadership in this most unusual time.

SENATOR PICKARD:

I echo my colleagues in that I do not envy your position. These decisions are always tough, I noticed in the budget we are cancelling end-of-course exams. My colleague from District 2 spoke of measuring achievement. I recognize we generally over test our students, but please explain how we can ensure they are learning what they have been taught if we are cancelling the end-of-course exams.

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

We first looked through what the federal government requires and identified those pieces of equity where our students are being successful and where they need additional assistance. Those components were waived last spring. We do not know what will happen in the future, but we are having conversations on how that will play out next spring. End-of-course exams are actually State exams we administer. They are in addition to the ACT test administered to our college and career-assessment students. In this crisis, we felt eliminating this assessment knowing we have ACT gave us the metrics and understanding of how our children are progressing in education.

SENATOR PICKARD:

I hope this will be a study in how we can reduce overall testing, which is a burden on both the students and teachers.

Ms. Feiden, when you were talking about charter schools receiving the same amount of State funding as district schools, did I misunderstand your statement? In terms of the funding they receive from the State, how do the charters compare, and how do they differ from the district schools?

MS. FEIDEN:

Charter schools receive the same basic DSA support guarantee as district schools. There are some variances when it comes to specific grants, but many of the grants released by DOE or allocations from the Legislature are also allocated to charter schools. Funding will not be exactly the same. The formula is generally comparable, and the funding is similar.

SENATOR PICKARD:

Dr. Jara, what are we doing in terms of the technology piece? Please elaborate. We are providing devices, and I think you said we have a \$1 million in replacement costs as well. What are we doing to ensure students have access to the Internet so they do not just have a device in front of them but can actually participate?

DR. JARA:

We are looking at the infrastructure within our schools, that is one thing we have to add to our buildings. We are going to use bond dollars for that. We have had conversations with Cox Communications and are in the process of identifying the communities, zip codes and neighborhoods where Wi-Fi connectivity is limited. My Board of Trustees asked us to bring them the cost for hotspots. This is around \$27 million, but please do not quote me specifically on that amount. This is for finding connectivity for our children at home so we have a multipronged approach. We are looking at how Cox Communications and other providers can help and how we can help with the costs for hotspots. As part of the plan we have to submit to the State, there is a requirement for that to happen. We do not have the funds for this. I hope that the federal government will allocate and pass the HEROES Act and open up more funding for our children. Connectivity is a real issue for our kids.

SENATOR PICKARD:

I know the district went so far as to provide mobile hotspots and other things on a temporary basis in recognition of that critical missing link. Do you think that once you have an idea of the cost, you will be able to come to this Body, within the next few days or before we make any final decisions, or is that going to be a cost we address next Session?

DR. JARA:

That is a great suggestion. We most likely can. We will be presenting this to our Board. We can certainly get it to this Body for possible deliberation. That would be greatly appreciated in Clark County. I know our families would warrant support of this bill.

SENATOR HANSEN:

My question revolves around the question of liability and is directed at the Superintendents of the two largest school districts. Since the lawsuit against the casino industry has been filed by the Culinary Union, there has been a concern across the State that any businesses that could be reopened face a potential liability. How critical is it for school districts to be able to get some level of protection or a hold-harmless arrangement from the Legislature? Is that a high priority to you? Do you have a concern about lawsuits?

DR. JARA:

We are extremely concerned. I appreciate the question, and that would be greatly appreciated by Clark County.

SENATOR HANSEN:

Dr. McNeil, could you address it for Washoe County?

DR. MCNEIL:

We would be in full support of that. Obviously, the safety of our employees and students are our number-one priority. Thank you for the question and thank you for consideration of that issue.

SENATOR HANSEN:

How important is it for you to emphasize to this Body that this is something you need right away? Is this something you want to push off until February when we have a regular Session? Is this something that, for cost purposes with insurance and liability, is a high priority now?

DR. JARA:

It is critical in order for us to open schools.

DR. MCNEIL:

It is critical for us in Washoe County School District as well.

SENATOR HANSEN:

To reemphasize, this high priority needs to be done in this Special Session.

SENATOR HARRIS:

Please discuss the progress you have made in implementing the school-safety measures adopted by the 2019 Legislature. These include facility enhancement, the Social and Academic Development Strategic Plan and all of the other provisions provided for under that bill.

DR. MCNEIL:

In the Washoe County School District, priority has been on our SafeSchools Professionals, our social workers. We have those positions filled, and they have been extremely important to our schools in providing social-emotional support to our students and staff members during this time.

DR. STEPHENS:

Last year, in Churchill County, we were able to secure funds for SafeSchools Professionals a resource officer. Those had been areas we were not adequately addressing. We are still not, but we will take the money we can get. Last year, with additional General Fund dollars, we were able to put into place SafeSchools Professionals. Our goal is to maintain that program. That will be an important priority when we look at any possible reductions we may have. We want to maintain our great connection with local law enforcement and do things to build a great relationship between the children and law enforcement instead of a negative one.

Finally, we were the recipients of a significant amount of funding to continue to improve single-point-of-entry camera systems, fencing-in some large campuses, external locks and staff training. We will continue to do that with the funds that have been allotted.

DR. JARA:

Some of our vacancies were not filled and will not be filled. We did not receive any funding for facility enhancements. With these reductions we are concerned about facilities. We are going to go back and look at our bond money, which is already short, to use for facility improvements. We need to look at the things we are prioritizing to ensure we can continue with the projects we had in place after we did our analysis regarding our safety point of entry. We will have to look at our bond money to be able to do those upgrades.

SENATOR HARRIS:

We know teachers and students are going to be impacted by these cuts. Given that knowledge, do we have a plan on how teachers will be evaluated moving forward? Please, specifically, address student-learning goals. We adjusted that last Session, and I want to make sure teachers are not adversely impacted on their performance evaluation because of this new kind of normal.

FELICIA GONZALES (Deputy State Superintendent, Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement, Nevada Department of Education):

For the evaluation of teachers currently to the Teachers and Leaders Council, we have already convened a working group of educators from across the State to discuss how we can make adaptations to our current framework for evaluating teachers and administrators reflective of the environments in which teachers will be teaching, including hybrid-learning environments and fully online distance-learning environments. Once we have these recommendations, we will present them to the District Superintendents for review before they are pushed out.

SENATOR SCHEIBLE:

I wanted to address the GEAR UP program and confirm my understanding is correct. Is it correct that we are not reducing the program, we are just finding savings by changing how we fund it?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

The GEAR UP program is federally funded. You may be looking at some of the positions we shifted, but with GEAR UP being a federal program, it is not, at this point, affected by these budget cuts.

SENATOR SCHEIBLE:

Are you shifting some of the funding for GEAR UP positions from General Funds to those federal grants?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

We have currently a vacant position in the federally funded Gear Up program. We are going to take a partially State-funded position and put it into a partially funded federal position for cost savings.

SENATOR SCHEIBLE:

Why are we generally not doing that as a practice with every position we can? Why does it take a review of the budget to recognize areas where we can move people into federally-funded positions instead of General Fund positions?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

There is complete elimination of Read by Grade 3 dollars for Fiscal Year 2021. In addition, there were savings in Fiscal Year 2020 that, when added together, make a full reduction of approximately \$31 million.

SENATOR SCHEIBLE:

I am concerned about the kids in those families. Do we have a plan, or even an idea, about how we are going to get them the services they need?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

We are all concerned about these reductions. This is where you will see creativity among the school districts in how they provide services. One of the pleasing things that has come out of this pandemic is reaching out and the breaking down of silos. Resource questions were asked earlier about private sector at the State level. We also have the private sector, I mentioned earlier, with a reading program and so, again, thinking differently about the work in this crisis because we know that all of our students need to be served. A budget reduction means looking at things differently and how to reach those goals is a challenge.

SENATOR SCHEIBLE:

It is certainly a challenge for us. How much does the success of a program play in decisions regarding funding? Are we protecting the most successful programs? How has that weighed into the decision-making process?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

The top priority identified by all school districts and the Charter School Authority was keeping DSA whole. Between other programs, such as Zoom and Victory, we serve almost 90,000 students. We will be happy to provide reports to them and the Body showing where we have seen great success. You continue to fund those programs yearly because you continue to see success with vulnerable students.

Another discussion was about our special-education students and services for the disabled. The shift has happened much quicker than any of us would have anticipated and supports our teachers, administrators and families as we make the shift and work together to find that path forward are important. All of those pieces have come into play in making these decisions.

SENATOR SCHEIBLE:

As politicians, all of us know what it is like to be in the hot seat. You are not politicians and you are in the hot seat. I appreciate that this is not easy.

SENATOR WASHINGTON:

Superintendent Ebert, you said earlier that \$117 million came from the CARES Act and 90 percent of it was going to the Charter School Authority, which is \$105 million. What is happening to the other \$12 million, and where is it being delegated?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

That \$117 million is for the entire State. The \$105 million is for all of the school districts as well as the Charter School Authority. Clark County School District is receiving \$83 million and Washoe \$9 million. The only school district not receiving part of the \$105-million ESSER allocation is Eureka. Eureka currently does not participate in Title I, Part A funding, so they do not qualify for these funds. That is a regulation from the federal government we had to follow in allocating Title I dollars directly to the school districts.

The \$105 million is going to public and charter schools across the State. The other \$11 million has been made available for grants for professional development, high-quality instructional materials and wraparound services. That money and those grants are available for district applications. There are approximately 25 days left to submit grant proposals.

SENATOR WASHINGTON:

You said \$26 million was available for the Emergency Fund and gave the breakdown. Could you please send that to us? I looked through my handouts, and I could not find a breakdown of the \$26 million Emergency Fund.

SENATOR SPEARMAN:

Superintendent Ebert, you said something about not being able to find qualified social workers. Please expand on that.

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

Yes, the school district had vacant social-worker positions which are part of the reversion.

SENATOR SPEARMAN:

Are these licensed social workers in Nevada? I am asking this for a number of other reasons.

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

Yes, Senator, that is correct.

SENATOR SPEARMAN:

You also mentioned things were a bit different with respect to competency-based instruction for students. Please explain.

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

Would you like me to give you an example of competency-based?

SENATOR SPEARMAN:

Yes.

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

I will give you an example of this. A child who is in second grade during the pandemic may be in a home where they love and enjoy reading during this time of closure. The family has been reading books and having conversations as a family and actually have competitions. The Clark County School District is having summer competitions in reading and has done a phenomenal job.

On the other hand, right now in the same family, science or mathematics may not be where they are focusing. The child is not attending school where there is the expectation of learning mathematic skills, and that child has not had that exposure during this time at home. When the child comes back to school, the teacher will sit with the child and have a conversation about the areas covered in classroom instruction. From this, for example, we may find the child now excels as a second grader and, chronologically, would be going into third grade.

That is the normal system we have been using for hundreds of years. We have been sending the majority of our children on to the next grade by age, but we now have the opportunity to look at a child who may be third grade but is at a fourth-grade reading level. We want to make sure we meet that child where they are at, the fourth-grade reading level. In mathematics, however, exposure and growth did not happen for that student. We know students need a base in mathematics. If a student does not have a strong base, they cannot move through the process and, in this scenario, would still be at a second-grade level. Meeting that child at a fourth-grade reading level and also meeting that child at a second-grade level in math, were it to be done in classrooms by individual teachers would be a lot of work. If we leverage the technology that is available and the capacity of our parents as well, we can meet the child where they are, so by the time they graduate from high school they can be successful in our community.

SENATOR SPEARMAN:

One of things we are seeing more of during this pandemic is that more jobs have gone away and will not come back. Have you looked down the road at any types of partnerships or working with other industries to modify the curriculum, so when our students graduate, they are ready for work or technical school?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

That was one of the reasons to keep whole and extend career and technology education dollars with a recommendation to remove the enhancement from this last year. We also worked with Work Force Connection and other partners in the north and south to make sure we have a shift in how we provide opportunities for apprenticeships and internships. Moving forward, higher education is working collaboratively with the Chancellor, Vice Chancellor and others to make sure we have continuity in the process and accelerate the process as well. Is all of that done and mapped out completely over the last 100 days? I would say "no," but we are working on it.

SENATOR SPEARMAN:

I want to shift gears and go back to the New Education Funding Plan. There are some communities that have been hit harder than others particularly the African-American community in this COVID-19 environment. One of the things that is happening is more and more parents are under stress from losing their jobs. There are a number of things happening in communities and in homes. When we move forward to something new, because I do not want to go back to normal, normal was not that great, but I am hoping we can move into something that will be better.

In a post-COVID environment, have you looked at the effects PTSD could have right now with our students? We talk about equity, children may start out at the same level, but depending upon their environment, this may accelerate their growth. For some, it may impede their growth. What things are you looking at in terms of what you need to put in place? I am specifically thinking about social workers. Do we need to help you put this in place so when children and students go back to school the vicissitudes of this pandemic can be addressed and will not affect their ability to learn?

Last Session, I had a bill that dealt with ACE and their childhood experience, and it was a suicide-prevention bill. Someone said, a few weeks back, there were about five suicides. I have not been able to determine whether those were students in the school district or whether they were people affiliated. In the post-COVID environment, what do we need to have in place? What kind of building blocks and foundation do we need to ensure there are wraparound services to provide emotional support for students, teachers and administrators?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

Working together is the only way we are all going to get through this, so thank you. The reductions with social workers are only because of the vacant positions. You do not see any other reductions in that area. That was limited. We have a phenomenal social-emotional support team. I believe you worked with Director Kristie Miguel who leads it with our Deputy State Superintendent Gonzales. There were not many things on top of the list of social-emotional learning and multiple-tier systems of support. We have been working hard as a State to make sure it is integrated and to break down silos.

As an example, the Pershing County School District has been doing a phenomenal job. Over the last five years, they have been working and collaborating. The school district, the County, the Fire Department, families and the churches have been working in concert and wrapping themselves around all of the children as a whole. As you noted, because of the pandemic, we know these numbers are rising at a much higher rate than would have happened in February. I have asked the team to focus specifically on high-leverage practices we know work and to make sure our social workers, school psychologists and partners are well aware of and have a laser focus on those high-leverage practices. We know we are in a crisis mode, and we need to focus. That team is working on that.

The Governor was gracious and allowed me, as State Superintendent of Public Instruction, to shift some instructional time to professional development. In the last guidance we issued as a department, we allowed school districts an additional five days of professional development time to be inclusive in looking at social-emotional support not only for our children but also for our educators and other adults.

We are just over 100 days into this pandemic, and we continue to leverage the few resources we have. If anyone in this Body or the public has ideas on how to accelerate this work and provide support differently, we stand ready to listen. We are ready to move forward on those practices we know work or move forward in a new way to provide the support our children need.

SENATOR SPEARMAN:

I appreciate you taking the time to do that. We have referred to a single pandemic. Over the years, we know with regard to education, whether by design or default, the other pandemic we deal with is structural racism. My concern is to make sure the least of these, our children, students and communities who have typically not been paid attention to with respect to their needs receive attention. The numbers we are looking at on our handouts represent more than numbers. They are people's lives and children's futures. This job before us is not easy. Remember, these are people and not just numbers.

SENATOR HAMMOND:

You talked about a working group you have that is discussing accountability for teachers and administrators. I do not recall procedural steps that are taken once you determine the changes to make. Do you need to come before this Body to affect those changes? If so, that would not happen until the regular Session next year.

I know you are getting rid of course exams this year. Superintendent Ebert mentioned the unprecedented times we are in and talked about the challenges. Last year was an example of that. We saw a waiver come from the federal government, and we took advantage of it. We petitioned for the waiver to remove us from standardized testing at the end of the year, specifically the SMART Balance Exam, and received it. Have you heard anything about a waiver for next year? If you have, are we applying for the waiver? If we do, where does that put us in relationship to our vendor and the contract we have with them? Are we renegotiating any kind of contract with them? If so, is there a savings that is not reflected in the budget cuts we have before us? In some cases, testing is good, but we would love to look at it overall and find out where we can reduce it. Many people would like to test some of the students coming back this fall to find how much of a slide occurred. We always get a summer slide, and I think the virus slide is real. In order to accomplish your goal related to competency-based instruction, quite a bit of testing needs to be done to find out where students are. This is different from standardized testing.

DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT GONZALES:

The working group is meeting to determine where the current Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF) can be adapted following other national guidelines. There will be no structural changes. We need to make sure we can provide clear guidance on how district administrators can utilize this framework and apply it in blended, hybrid and distance-learning environments. It will not have to go in front of the Senate. I want to emphasize that once the recommendations are received and reviewed, we will be pushing it out to all District Superintendents for review. It will also go to all NEPF liaisons in all districts for their review. We will work quickly with the Regional Professional Development Program and our own staff to

provide online webinars so all administrators who are utilizing the framework are prepared and trained to utilize the current framework, however, adapted to the new environment.

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

A balanced assessment system is about equity. We want to ensure we know where there are gaps, and what our children know and are able to do. A balanced assessment system is part of an equity agenda and needs to be present. On behalf of the State, I applied for a waiver for the spring assessment, which was authorized by the U.S. Department of Education. That immediately caused a stop-work order with our vendor. We had already administered ACT, so we did not need to stop that contract. You will note there is an almost \$1 million reversion for testing cost savings in Fiscal Year 2020.

I had the opportunity to speak with the U.S. Secretary of Education, my colleagues and peers across the United States. We would like an answer quickly regarding what assessment and accountability will look like this school year. If we are to move forward, we want to know that. If there is going to be a shift, we want to know that as well so we can redirect those dollars to support our students.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

I appreciate all of the work you are putting in to help our families and students deal with these crises.

Senate Bill No. 178 of the 79th Session funds, the New Nevada Fund and Read by Grade 3 funds are not distributed on a formula. They are based on student numbers and other factors as well. Could you provide us with information about the impact of these cuts on each individual district as well as the number of students who qualify for services under these programs? That would be helpful and informative because it is not necessarily student-population based.

Additionally, there was a huge component in Senate Bill No. 178 of the 79th Session legislation we passed regarding family engagement and working with the communities to discuss how the money was going to be spent and how programs were to be implemented. Are there any plans to talk to those same communities and family groups about how you will continue to try and serve those students without these resources?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

We will provide you with those numbers. I turn to the Superintendents to give you specific examples of how they are working with their communities to provide support as noted under Senate Bill No. 178 of the 79th Session.

DR. MCNEIL:

We have been able to utilize our Reopening Task Force, and we have a subcommittee specifically focused on wraparound services and family engagement. Under the leadership of D'Lisa Crane and her team, a family newsletter has gone out. It provides information about where families can go to receive specific resources in their area. Whether it is food security, Internet connections, basic needs or social-emotional support counseling services, we have addressed these things in the newsletter that was sent out to all of our families on a weekly basis since we have gone into closure. In regards to the specific Senate Bill No. 178 of the 79th Session, funding and family engagement, we will be able to use federal dollars, Title IV specifically, around social-emotional learning supports and our multi-tiered system of supports to make sure our families have the information they need.

DR. JARA:

In Clark County, \$54 million will be lost from Senate Bill No. 178 of the 79th Session and \$17 million from Read by Grade 3. We have delayed planning with our principals because we are waiting on final-funding decisions. As soon as the numbers are finalized here, we will continue. As I have stated multiple times, our building principals are closest to the ground. We will be working with them to make the difficult decisions to ensure we provide the wraparound services needed using our general operating budget.

DR. STEPHENS:

To continue providing the services previously funded by Senate Bill No. 178 of the 79th Session and Read by Grade 3, we are building the cost of those positions into the General Fund.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

Dr. Jara previously stated there might be some relief from the statutory expectations for implementation of some of these programs. Are you expecting us to change the language of Read by Grade 3 or the New Nevada Funding Plan as a part of these reductions?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

Suspension of some of those requirements with the waiving of the dollars specifically, like for instance, the bill specifically states the school district must identify a literacy strategist, so all of those various components we would hope would be suspended with the shift.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

We will watch for that in legislation. In an answer to a previous question, you were specific to say that, particularly for Read by Grade 3, the funding was being eliminated for Fiscal Year 2021 not necessarily the program. Is there a long-term commitment to the Read by Grade 3 program, or is this going to be a first leap in eliminating the program in its entirety?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

The formal component that you, as the Legislative Body, have enacted over the years for the Read by Grade 3 program has been greatly appreciated. We know having support and a strategist in a system is vital, especially where the students who are new to our State speak multiple languages or who have had no access to materials at a pace that we would like to see them have. Supports have been very important. That does not change the goal of having all. If children are not able to read at grade level by grade three, there is a potential path that builds the prison pipeline.

At the State level, we must continue to ensure our students have access to the resources they need. That includes highly effective educators and support for our families in this work. The pupil-centered funding formula we know, if that moves forward, all of these grants-type programs would see dollars shift if the Legislature made the determination to do so. So those components and alignment and looking toward the future also came onto play as the decisions were made. The high expectation of ourselves as adults is to ensure that our children are at the grade level they should be at each and every grade, starting with pre-K.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

There is a \$6.4 million elimination to pre-K. You indicated you would backfill these funds with CARES Act money. Does that mean there will be fewer seats, or are we going to reduce the amount we are allocating for each seat in pre-K?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

You are correct there is a \$6.2-million reduction for Fiscal Year 2021. We are looking to backfill this with \$4.6 million of secured dollars from the Governor that leaves a delta of \$1.6 million. Right now, we plan to provide all of those seats, and we are asking school districts if they are going to provide all of those seats. We know one school district may not be at this point. Our intent is to provide those seats and move forward with our partners. We will have to see how that plays out as dollars are made available.

SENATOR CANCELA:

I have questions that relate to ESSER funds and some of the assumptions made around that spending. I appreciate that Dr. Jara went through and outlined the line items these dollars would be spent and would like to hear similar outlines from others. I am especially interested in two items. The first is how was the \$96,000 Chromebook hole identified? The second is what kind of assumptions are being made around PPE usage and necessity?

DR. JARA:

The \$96,000 is for the 70,000 devices needed for our 320,000 student enrollment. We added 5 percent for replacement costs. This way, we will not have an issue if a device breaks, we will

have a cushion in inventory. The supply chain is challenging at this point because everyone across the Country and world is buying devices at this time. The \$15 million for PPE is to allow us to provide cloth masks to our educators and our students who do not have them.

SENATOR CANCELA:

Is that for the entire school year?

DR. JARA:

Yes.

DR. STEPHENS:

The consensus, statewide, is waiting to see what the numbers look like. Like many of my colleagues, we are awaiting the outcome of this Special Session budget before earmarking CARES funds. We are using funds to backfill four to six teaching positions that may be impacted from those other cuts. I do not have the same technology needs as other districts. Other districts are planning to use their ESSER funds for technology enhancement and for backfilling positions we would have had to cut otherwise.

DR. MCNEIL:

We are still putting together the finalized numbers. Once we know what our budget is, we will be able to provide more accurate numbers. The Board has decided a great portion of ESSER funding is going to be for face coverings because we made the recommendation, and the Board supported mandatory face coverings for all of our staff and students when they return to school. We are ordering Wi-Fi hotspots and additional devices, hand sanitizer and additional cleaning supplies. There are also printing costs we want to put into our ESSER application. When we were on a full distance-learning model, we printed over 150,000 packets to make sure our students who did not have connectivity or a device were able to fully engage with their distance learning. Our focus will be on PPE devices, Wi-Fi hotspots, cleaning supplies and printing costs.

MS. FEIDEN:

Our schools, similar to other school districts are working to put plans forth. They may have to amend those plans given the decisions made during this Special Session. Many have put aside funds for technology and connectivity costs. We are seeing significant costs going toward PPE, cleaning supplies and maintaining existing positions. Many of the positions are dedicated to individuals in the mental-health profession. We were allocated \$4.6 million. Thus far, those funds can be used going back to March of this year. So far, about \$350,000 has been spent, and the remainder will be used in the upcoming school year.

SENATOR CANCELA:

Have ESSER funds already been dispersed, or have they been allocated and not dispersed?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

They have been allocated. The school districts need to submit requests to finalize those funds, but they are allocated to the districts and ready to be drawn down.

SENATOR CANCELA:

Superintendent Ebert, you gave an articulate description of the diversity within our State and districts. I want to make sure as we crusade into this new frontier of digital education that we are mindful of the need to ensure that materials are distributed in a handful of languages, mainly Spanish and the ... (unintelligible statement) ... in the south and throughout the State to enable parents to do the work to interact with students. I am curious as to whether or not, anticipating the incurred changes because of cuts, if those costs have been considered because they are certainly ones that are important to ensuring our students are successful.

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

Yes, all of our materials need to be accessible in multiple languages. A contract at the State level, has been finalized for all State entities to be able to use translation services for our documents. That is now available. I learned we had not been translating our documents, so we set aside dollars at the State level to be able to translate documents and make them accessible to the

public. Also, there were several private entities that stepped up in the interim to help us translate some of our documents. In the guidance that was issued to the individual school districts there was a specific metric used based on languages within their communities so that across our State documents will be provided in multiple languages as well.

SENATOR CANCELA:

Assessments have been discussed, and I would like to dig a little deeper on that and ask specifically about remediation. Once we have been able to assess and identify where students are, to me it is undeniable, despite what our herculean efforts are on behalf of our educators and staff across the State, the change from in-person to digital learning creates challenges. Students may not meet the benchmarks they need. Speaking from personal experience as someone who finished my last semester of law school online, it is a different experience to be in front of a computer screen rather than in a classroom. I am an adult, and I cannot imagine that change for someone like a third grader. As we look at assessments and all of these cuts, how do we factor in the potential need for remediation? Are these costs accounted for as districts are putting together their budgets?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

This is one of those areas we have the opportunity to do things differently. Some schools and school districts have already done that. After assessments and gaining an understanding of where children are, some schools within our State are continuing practices that are supportive in this pandemic. I will give you a few examples. One is looping, and that is where a teacher—I will use the second grade example—the second grade teacher had a full course load when the pandemic hit in March. When the students comes back, they are back with that same teacher. Social/emotional components are hit there. That teacher is the one who was with the student up until March 16th and is well-positioned to know that child. Some schools in our districts are implementing that one practice.

The other piece, you have Dr. Stephens who is shifting her entire school district, which is part of the pilot authorized by the Legislature and instead of opting in with a few schools with the Superintendents on this call, Dr. Jara as well as Dr. McNeill have schools that are currently participating in competency-based education. Dr. Stephens and her team shifted the entire school district. This is where the technology can be supportive of learning. I have participated in distance education for over two decades. At one point in time, the Legislature was contemplating a requirement that all students participate in distance learning.

This goes to meeting our children where they are. When I was the principal of a virtual school, we had students that were extremely successful. Miss Teen Nevada needed to have a flexible schedule. She was able to earn a diploma from a school in our State and travel and meet her needs. Other students have found a home in distance education. They felt disconnected in the environment they were in but felt very comfortable in distance education, yet that is not true for every child. We need to construct a successful learning environment that supports our children and families to enable them to create that future home and life when they graduate from our school.

SENATOR BROOKS:

Superintendent Ebert, I wanted to ask you a few questions about adult education. I see that we are proposing through reversions and cuts a little over \$1.2 million. What is the total statewide budget for adult education before those cuts?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

It was \$13 million prior to the cut, but we are verifying that moving forward. With adult education offered for recommendation reversion is the enhancement that the Legislature authorized last year, the enhancement was the \$1.2 that made the determination. That would be the offered reduction. We are scheduled to do a presentation to the Legislative Committee on Education. The data for that program showed we increased about 7 percentage points in success across the State, thanks to our correctional institutions and as well as our school district. We have seen success in the last few years with our adult-education program. It was originally \$19 million. The original Fiscal Year 2021 funding was \$19 million, and the reduction is 1 point.

SENATOR BROOKS:

Can you briefly talk about the mission of adult education and the population of Nevadans that it serves?

DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT GONZALES:

This funding supports adults who are trying to achieve their high school equivalency and/or their high school diploma or adult high school diploma while incarcerated. As of 2019, we were able to serve over 15,000 students enrolled in our adult high schools within each of the school districts or in our correctional facilities. As Superintendent Ebert has already told you, since 2016, we have increased over 7 percentage points with these adults earning a high school diploma or high school equivalency. This is important not only for our recovery but also for our economy and their success. Approximately eighty-five percent of the adults who participate in adult education speak English as a second language. This is a high population of English language learners, and we are happy to serve them through this funding.

SENATOR BROOKS:

Like so many other Nevadans, my life got off to a rocky start. Like so many other Nevadans, I was able to change that course and succeed largely due to the work that adult education does. I appreciate your ability to maintain the majority of the budget of adult education and see the great success you have achieved.

SENATOR SETTELMAYER:

Following up from a question the Senator from District 10 had asked earlier, since things have changed so much, are we seeing the allocation of professional-developmental dollars change to focus on distance learning? Sadly, when this all began, many teachers out there did not necessarily have the training in distance learning. Has there been a focus change on the professional-developmental dollars in the counties, and how that is being put forward?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

I will let the counties jump in, what I would note is the original professional-development program has been providing support to school districts, teachers specifically, and shifting. They have spent a lot of time working on specific standards for the reopening of schools to a number of questions asked earlier. With that, Dr. Jara or Dr. McNeil, would you like to respond?

DR. JARA:

Yes, we have allocated \$3 million in our budget from ESSER dollars for reopening schools. In our proposal to reopen our campuses, if, and when, how we will do this, we have allocated ten days for professional learning for our educators. We closed throughout the summer, and we knew that our teachers, students and parents needed more support. Within our proposal that we are presenting to the Board this evening, because of social distancing, how do we open schools, and how are we going to operate. On that Wednesday, we are providing professional learning for our educators to ensure we continue to stay in touch with our kids. We need to provide in and invest in all of our educators and building administrators.

The last thing, through the summer, we have been providing professional learning on a voluntary basis. We do not have the resources to pay them to come, but it is summertime. That is something we have been doing in Clark County.

DR. MCNEIL:

In Washoe County, we offered a full suite of professional-learning services over the summer in order for teachers to gain recertification credits. Our School Board approved our recommendation to have five additional professional-learning days for the next school year. Our teachers will have professional learning around the use of our student-data-management system, Infinite Campus, and how they will take attendance. Our teachers want professional learning in the use of Microsoft Teams. More importantly, teachers have asked for and need time in their classrooms for planning and for professional-learning communities to focus on how teachers are communicating in grade levels and across departments. Classroom time is essential in order to set and ensure our students have what they need when they enter those doors on August 17.

DR. STEPHENS:

I echo the comments of the two Superintendents around what they are doing. Our parents and students also need additional training. We have students who are digital natives but not in the way to use the tools for learning. Part of our back-to-school professional development will be around building the instructional opportunities to teach and have kids learn ways to use the tools on how to write and respond to an email, how to manage a calendar electronically. Some of those basic pieces, we made assumptions that kids already knew. Some of our adults do not know this. We are going to keep working on that.

I want to reinforce, Superintendent Ebert talked about the RPDP component of the connection and how they are enhancing their work. The work they have been doing, because of that great cooperative service, we have a number of staff members taking part in those trainings. Locally, we could not financially afford to do over the summer and have had staff take advantage of those trainings. I hope those efforts continue with the use of the service agencies.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

Regarding the counselors, the social workers, the psychologists and our Title I schools, I am concerned about our students who need that support the most, and it is no longer available to them. I am concerned about all of the students who have been home and maybe only come to school two days a week and need that continued support. I would like one of you to address are those people going to be part of the schools safety teams, and if so, how are those roles going to be absorbed? What is going to happen?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

I would take one step back to the component of the Department before turning it over to the Superintendents. Focusing our ... (unintelligible statement) ... office has spent much time with the multitier systems of support. Triaging is what we are doing. We have a structural issue, and we are triaging those supports. I will turn it over to the Superintendents for further specifics regarding the hybrid models they will be deploying.

DR. STEPHENS:

Some cuts proposed in the plan will not be cutting the positions we do have. We have a focused, back-to-school plan that is our first reentry plan for kids being around, not academic content but, about social-emotional wellness, agency and supporting them on a number of fronts. This is a reentry plan for our staff as well. The training will be for the adults, including our SafeSchools professional, school psychologist and counselors, and then building plans for the students. These people work collaboratively together throughout the school year, and they will continue to do so. Did you have a question about school safety and people who are part of our ongoing teams? In our county, we have the Youth Working Group that works collaboratively to support our county's youth.

DR. MCNEIL:

To reiterate, one of the reasons we are supportive of this proposal is that it keeps intact critical positions: our school psychologist, counselors and social workers. In the Washoe County School District, our Board of Trustees has approved for our elementary schools to go back in full, in person, following all social distancing and other requirements set by the Governor's directive.

Our middle and high schools will be on a hybrid distance-learning model with an A/B rotation which is two days in and then three days where they receive either synchronic or asynchronies instruction from our teachers. The reentry process that Dr. Stephens was talking about is an important part of professional learning needs so teachers are well prepared when students return to the building to ensure a multisystem of support as well as social-emotional learning. The Washoe County School District has received national recognition for our social-emotional learning programs, which is important as our students reenter our schools.

DR. JARA:

Some dollars from the Safety Grant were for vacant positions. Our first try now is to work with our building principals and not make any reductions. Once we receive the final budget from this Body and the Legislature, we will work with our school building principals to ensure we address the needs of our students. We know how critical this is for us. When we closed the schools, we

saw there was a huge gap and deployed our wellness staff members to go out into the community.

The final numbers of students that we did not identify was about 2 percent of our children. Our team continues to remain vigilant within not only our wellness text but also contacts throughout the summer. Social workers, and staff, continue the wellness checks for our families as they continue reentry, as you have heard from my colleagues, Dr. Stephens and Dr. McNeil, so very similar programs. It is important to note that last year, our Board of Trustees approved an EAP program to support all of our employees through our support system. This program continues for our teachers, support professionals and all other administrators throughout the district. This has impacted all of us differently. It is critical for adult- and student-support systems to be in place.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

I have worked hard to ensure our counselors are identified properly and doing the right jobs in our schools. "Critical" is the important word in these unusual circumstances. I implore all of you to make sure those critical positions stay in our schools.

Moving on from that, I am concerned for our special-needs students, autistic students. For example, can you address how we are going to work with them with only two school days per week?

DR. JARA:

That is a challenge, and one of the things we discussed with the counselors ... (unintelligible statement). We are resurrecting, if you will, federal government funding, the HEROES Act and some of the other funding that is needed for our students with special needs. We are looking to have virtual office hours. Our speech pathologist, occupational therapist and all of our special services will continue that process for our IP students. This is a concern, and we are trying to bring them in five days a week. Some of our students with our largest ... (unintelligible statement) ... we just stick to our class size. Our class size and building spaces are challenging in Clark County. It is difficult to bring our kids in five days per week. There will be virtual contact whether it is a phone call, Google Meet and other ways that provide the services our teachers and students need.

DR. MCNEIL:

It has been a challenge for Washoe County to provide specially-designed instruction for our special-needs students. However, as being identified in a vulnerable population, we are committed to provide in-person services on a five-day model if the parents or guardians would like their students to participate. Our special-needs students will be included within that population and will receive specially designed instruction if their parents so desire.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

I ask that you keep the mental health of our students and teachers in mind. In the Governor's declaration, there was discussion about monies at schools in the larger districts. The monies are important especially when a school may not have Title 1 or other matching funds. Was there any discussion about pulling those funds out and using them for other purposes?

DR. JARA:

As much as we appreciate the flexibility, when you look at the dollars, we have had these conversations with principals. I have a group of principals in my budget task force, since last year, and that is something we will work with our building principals while following the law so they can work with school organizational teams to address their budget gaps.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

Budgets have been cut almost every year. For clarification, for those monies, principals have been judicious about funding their school and making sure the funds will stay in that school? Is that what I am understanding you to say?

DR. JARA:

That is exactly what I said. The \$120 million that is out will remain at the schools for building principals to make the decision with our school organizations.

SENATOR DENIS:

I appreciate all of the great questions and information with our presenters here and able to answer those questions. On page 2, budget 2699, number 27, on the college-career readiness, what does that mean, and how will it impact the college-career readiness that has been going on?

HEIDI HAARTZ (Deputy State Superintendent, Business and Support Services):

It was recommended to reduce the funding of one fiscal year, 2021, by \$5 million, which represents the total amount of funding available. This program pays for students who are duly enrolled in high school as well as college-level courses. It also provides funding for middle and high school for science technology, engineering, math programs and some grant funding for work-based learning opportunities.

SENATOR DENIS:

Are you saying that in Fiscal Year 2021, the funding for those would be eliminated?

DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT HAARTZ:

Yes. The recommendation was developed in concert with the Superintendents of each school district is that those funds would be reduced for Fiscal Year 2021.

SENATOR DENIS:

You mentioned that was with dual enrollment, right, like JumpStart?

DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT HAARTZ:

Yes. That is my understanding.

SENATOR WASHINGTON:

This question is for the Superintendents. Since the COVID-19 shutdown, give us a synopsis for each district's attendance. How are the ESL and Title 1 students affected?

DR. JARA:

We were able to contact about 98 percent of our children. As I have said multiple times, this does not mean all of them have learned. To be honest with this Body, the distance-education program we provided was a contact we made with our students. I am not here to tell you there was high-quality learning going on. Potentially, in many of our schools, there absolutely was. To be clear, putting packets out and providing a computer and hot spots and with lack of monitoring, we can all agree that in this global pandemic we all face, we did the best we were able to do.

My biggest concern, as Superintendent, is when children return, we will have a lot of catching up to do. The research and assessments that have been publicly stated by companies, when you look at five-million students in previous years with NEEA, our partner across the entire State, indicates about a 30- to 40-percent learning loss in reading, and math could be worse. That is for our average student. This learning loss is due to the shutdown. I believe the numbers are greater for our students of our low incomes and our English-language learners. Many things keep me up at night these days. One of the biggest ones is the impacts of shutting down our schools. I know our teachers and teams are working. Dr. Stephens mentioned to the Assembly that one of the most important things for us is the ability to assess our kids when they come back. We need to know where they are so our hard-working educators in our schools will be able to provide the interventions and accelerate their learning. I do not have specific data, but it is one of the things that keeps me up at night.

DR. MCNEIL:

We averaged about a 96-percent attendance rate, and I want to echo Dr. Jara's sentiment as well. We have a team that will be going out. They visited homes where we had no contact. Whether it was our children in transition population or our foster children in Washoe County, we have about 3,200 children in transition. This number increases. We know there is a housing issue. We have rental issues and evictions across our State. Specifically, in Washoe County with the increases in rental fees, that just exacerbates the issue as far as homelessness, that is one of the things our reengagement team was able to do. When there was no contact with a family for a period of days, doing all of the required and appropriate social distancing and PPE, they would physically go to the house and see if the family was there. If the family was there, they would ask

the family what types of basic services they need. Do you need food security? Do you need any rental assistance? If they did not find the family, teams worked with Child Protective Services to see if there was any additional follow up. I will restate what Dr. Jara said. This continues to be a concern of ours, and it is exacerbated by not being able to find where our students are.

DR. STEPHENS:

I think we all continue to lose sleep. The first five weeks of closure, all my staff heard from me was where are we at on the list. We took a comprehensive list from all of our students. When we contacted them, we found out on an initial check-in what other needs they had so we could address it. I am proud of all of our staff that serve our English-learner students and their families. Through their great efforts, we had great success connecting with those families and providing support. We were able to ensure students were connected to enable final online things and had many students graduate. I am proud of our staff, students and their families in that regard. We did a lot of reach-out and the same thing for our students with special needs. Teachers continued to provide our students daily interventions for reading via electronic means. To reiterate, with attendance, it was more about trying to find a way to connect, and we certainly want to be safe.

Understand that some of our kids do not communicate with us in ways that are normal communication strategies for adults. Moving forward, should we need to go to a full closure again, we need to be mindful of connecting. We talk about meeting people where they are academically. It is also meeting people where they are in communication modes. We definitely want to do that and find better ways.

Honestly, part of the Department's expectation moving forward is to have better communication on our part, as districts, to take attendance and engage students. This is a multiway street, and we will do a better job as systems to engage and ensure that attendance piece with kids. We cannot say, well, they just did not call in or they just did not pick up my call; I left a message, so what else are we going to do. I appreciate the departments asking us in our reopening plans to strive for daily contact, if possible. It will not always be possible, but it is a great place to attain.

MS. FEIDEN:

When we aggregate the data for all of the charter schools that we sponsor, we saw attendance above 95 percent for the majority of weeks during the school-closure period. We did see attendance trail off a bit in week nine, but we saw strong attendance rates. We certainly give that credit to our schools for their efforts. We did see some variation from school to school. Some of our schools with higher Title 1 populations were those that had some of those lower attendance rates. That certainly is a concern to us.

In addition, one thing we have been thinking about is leveraging some carry-over Title 2 dollars to conduct training available to all of our schools around instructional recovery as well as how our schools can assess where their students are and ensure they create plans to get those students back on track. We want to make sure that if a child missed part of the third grade, it does not mean that we do not push them to teach fourth grade standards. We have to understand the gaps created during the spring. We are working potentially with some partners to provide that training to our school leaders to ensure they think about the needs of their students this fall.

SENATOR PICKARD:

One thing I have been hearing, particularly given the magnitude of the impacts of the reduced Senate Bill No. 178 of the 79th Session, and the Read by Grade 3 funding, there have been several comments that the intent is to find other sources of income to backfill or fund those with General Fund dollars. Is there an organized plan? Is there guidance from the Department, or is this left up to the schools and the districts to figure out on their own? How are we going to approach the backfill as it has been described?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

Each school District Superintendent is making those determinations. You heard earlier the ways they will use their resources. Each are different but with the same goal of having our children educated.

SENATOR OHRENSCHALL:

Following up on the cuts in funding for Read by Grade 3, during the 2015 Session, I sponsored Assembly Bill No. 341 of the 78th Session. The bill dealt with children who have signs of dyslexia and prescribed an early literacy-assessment guide to be used from kindergarten to grade three. Part of Assembly Bill No. 341 of the 78th Session, dealt with the implementation of the learning strategist, one of the key people in the Read by Grade 3 plan. With the proposed cuts to Read by Grade 3, will it affect the screening of dyslexic children and getting them connected with the resources that could help them overcome their difficulties with reading?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

We know we have a lean education budget. Any cuts anywhere on our lean budget will affect children.

SENATOR OHRENSCHALL:

Could Superintendents from Washoe, Clark and Churchill comment on how it might affect children with dyslexia?

DR. JARA:

I agree there is going to be an impact to our children with some of these cuts that were recommended by the Department.

DR. MCNEIL:

I would agree. Through the MTSS process, we will still be able to provide support as far as identifying students with dyslexia. That will not change. As far as intervention strategies, we will do the best that we possibly can to ensure our students are receiving the supports they need, but it is going to be a challenge.

DR. STEPHENS:

I am new to this State. This is the end of my second year and the start of my third year here. I am not familiar, to the extent the other two may be, with the legislation you spoke about but, as I stated before, many districts are working to ensure they either still have the intervention in place or that those folks are going back into the classroom. I will take note of your concern, and I will take it back to the Superintendent group to ensure we are not missing that piece with dyslexia.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

Regarding the college-to-career readiness, you indicated those cuts were specific to dual enrollment. Does that mean those classes are no longer going to be offered? Are students going to have to pay for the college-enrollment fees associated with that, or are these programs going to be eliminated entirely for this fiscal year?

JOHNATHAN MOORE, PH.D. (Deputy State Superintendent, Student Achievement):

The funds related to college and career readiness, pupil reductions were administered or granted to districts on a competitive grant process. Each district would outline their priorities for how they would spend those funds as well as the services and support they would provide for those students. As it relates to dual enrollment, each of the school districts enter into an agreement with our institutions of higher education at the local level. Those determinations would have to be made with each school district regarding their ability to continue offering specific services of what those agreements were with those institutions of higher education.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

Maybe the districts could weigh-in on their understanding of what the implications will be.

DR. STEPHENS:

We entered the competitive process and, in the past, was supported and relied on those funds. Sitting at the table with that group, we collaboratively made some significant and strategic decisions. Our district has been working to build an excellent relationship with our community college. The space we feel we are in, it is going to be a challenge. We will look to what other funds come out of some of the other grant funds that are still available to us and make those decisions. Our goal is to have all of our students at the high-school level leave with college credits.

We need to find ways to support our students who are in the full JumpStart program. That is more expensive to us because those students are going to the college.

We have a great partnership with Western Nevada College, and we have some reduced tuition rates that we offer for concurrent enrollment classes from our high school teachers on staff that are able to teach with the accredited model of the college for a reduced rate. We are going to look to increase those opportunities so our students can continue to get those credits. This impacts the advanced placement funds, from my understanding.

We are going to look at how we support our kids as we work to increase. Clark County had some increase to their AP first enrollments, I do not know if they will be impacted at all. Maybe he can speak to that. Nevertheless, we are proceeding with our workplace learning to get more hands on deck. I work with that particular area so I will ensure that we continue to provide workplace-learning opportunities for our kids. These are some of the realities for us at this point.

DR. MCNEIL:

We will be able to continue with our dual-enrollment. We have a robust relationship with Truckee Meadows Community College. Our dual-enrollment classes have become popular with our high school students, especially around the areas of career-technical education. The biggest issue for us, unfortunately, will be sharing more of the costs with our families as far as what those dual-enrollment credits cost. We need to look at that as we put these plans into place.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

Can you give a quick idea of what that might be for a family? I know you can get a reduced rate from the colleges, but I do not know exactly what that is. Is it on a per-credit basis? I look forward to hearing from Dr. Jara as well.

DR. MCNEIL:

I can get you those rates. I do not have them right in front of me, but I can get those numbers for you.

DR. JARA:

When we looked at this budget reduction, we felt it had minimal impact to this program. We have a great relationship with CSN, Nevada State College (NSC) and UNLV. Some of these things our high schools already pick up within their budget for costs. We also use federal dollars, or Title 1 money as well. It can be used for the AP. As Dr. Stephens mentioned, Clark County has been increasing the AP enrollment using federal dollars for the AP and IP exams. It is just a matter of maneuvering some of our federal dollars for that. The partnership with our community colleges, CSN, NSC and UNLV is something we have to go back to the table for. Our children here in Nevada appreciate the Legislature funding this. My biggest concern is that this is a barrier for some of our neediest families. Our schools do a good job to eliminate that. We will continue to prioritize this for our students.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

If we are going to be pushing some of these costs onto students and creating a disproportionate access condition for some of our students, we should particularly be mindful and careful of that.

SENATOR WOODHOUSE:

We have had a robust conversation and discussion this morning about these cuts. I know we all agree this is devastating to our student population and their families. One thing that is key in my philosophy is that K-12 education prepares our students for life, a good family life, for college and the workforce. These cuts are the kinds of things that set our students back. It is difficult to deal with this. Two of my colleagues have addressed the dual-credit programs. These address the career and workforce pathways for our students. I want to quickly address two others and ask to make it your priority for reinstatement when the time comes.

Nevada is a leader in the Nation in computer science and technology. This creates an awesome pathway for so many of our students and fills those jobs in our business communities throughout the State. By these kinds of cuts, which we know we have to do, it sets back many things people do not understand. Maybe they understand it better.

The other one is that since 2015, Erin Gong, a Nevada youth legislator, addressed the educational need he observed from his fellow students, which is financial-literacy education. This legislation was passed in 2015, revamped in 2017 and expanded in 2019 to address this need our students have. Maybe some of the situations our families are facing today they would not be facing if they had this opportunity when they were going to school. The elimination of this program sends our students and teachers back to zero because both computer science and financial literacy were professional-development programs for our teachers to provide the kind of instruction our students need.

To Superintendent Ebert, to our Superintendents and to Ms. Feiden, could you share with us when Nevada recovers, because I continue to be optimistic, what would be your priorities for reinstating these kinds of programs in your school districts and across the State?

SUPERINTENDENT EBERT:

I would like to go back to the beginning of this presentation. All of this work has been in collaboration and conversations about how various grants affect the school districts, and the unique needs and what they have. I envision the process going back, which we have had many conversations over the last few months, about how to get to the \$180-million number. We would go back through that process again. One of the last cuts made was to pre-K, our earliest learners. That is why the Governor's dollars, the \$4.6 million, came into play quickly. Other than that and other priorities, we would follow direction from the Governor's Office. I would look to my colleagues for specifics, what they would like to share at this point in time. I see this as a collaborative process, just as we went through the process presenting the numbers to you today.

DR. STEPHENS:

As I stated in my opening piece, we know these are very important programs for our kids. I want to assure you that those two particular questions in our district are already part of the mesh of what we are doing. I do not want it to appear that we do not need funds to do these things. I am a person who expects people to pick up a lot and wear many hats. At some point, the funds are needed to be able to continue to support people without burning out.

This past year, we had six staff, K-12, who received their license for computer science through the program. They are going to be hitting the ground running with that endorsement, and that is fantastic. It will continue. We offer computer-science courses in our middle and high school. We have our after-school program with some things that the elementary will continue. We have cybersecurity and work with the Nevada Technology Academy for that particular work and expanding that connection and partnership, which is going to be critical when the funds are short. A partnership with our Churchill County Library who also is partnering with them to bring in the components for the Network+, A+ and other testing.

Our Board adopted to have financial literacy as a graduation requirement starting with our class of 2023, so that is in place. Our teachers that work in that area have sought out other grant funds to support the ongoing training down the line, down to elementary level. That will be in place in the coming year and then increasing our enrollment for that graduation requirement. I wanted you to know those are important to us. When that funding comes back, it makes it more robust. We are going to do what we can, but I want to reiterate it is not dropping at all from Churchill County School District.

DR. MCNEIL:

Both of those are priorities within the Washoe County School District, financial literacy as well as computer literacy and computer science. We have a robust partnership with many of our entities such as Tesla and Switch. We have apprenticeships, and we have different types of internships: computer literacy, computer science, coding and cybersecurity. We have the new Hug High campus which will be completed in the fall of 2022. We are looking to put programs as far as cybersecurity and coding within that as well. Our Board just approved additional programs for the conversion of the old Hug High campus, which is now the Debbie Smith CTE Academy. We will be having computer science programs there as well. For financial literacy, while we do not have the textbooks at this point in time, we are moving ahead with the implementation of the programming for school year 2022.

DR. JARA:

We are continuing with our computer-science program. Schools will continue to offer this program through their own school budgets. As far as financial literacy, we signed an MOA looking at this expectation in the last Board meeting. Junior Achievement is a private, nonprofit partner with us, and they will be providing financial literacy for all of our secondary schools at no cost to the District.

MS. FEIDEN:

These are important priorities. It is important that we do not let today's challenges limit the opportunities that we give to our students. We know many of our charter schools have incorporated computer science and computer programming into their curriculum already and have been working on the financial literacy component as well. We see this as a priority when funds become available.

SENATOR WOODHOUSE:

Thank you all for your continued support of these programs, and I want to thank you, again, Superintendent Ebert and all four representatives from the school districts. We have much work to do, and we appreciate the fact you have spent your time with us this morning to answer many of our questions. We will continue to work with you as we go through this process.

SENATOR CANNIZZARO:

We will now open the hearing to public comment.

ALONZO THORNTON:

I am a psychiatric nurse at Desert Regional Center, an Army veteran and a member of AFSCME Local 4041. Desert Regional Center is a residential center for severely disabled adults. My coworkers and I help some of the most vulnerable Nevadans with life's basic tasks including hygiene, diet and monitoring their physical, medical, psychological and spiritual well-being. Desert Regional Center remains a central service in the COVID-19 pandemic. As a 24-hour facility, our work will continue to remain essential.

Yesterday, you heard from the Department of DHHS leaders on the hard cuts they are forced to make in the healthcare programs. For reasons known only to individuals deciding what resources we will receive to continue to save lives, the health and well-being of American citizens has been placed at the bottom rung of our support system in favor of continued economic prosperity of those who need our services the least. In some circles, this is required to add acceptable losses. This should not be an admission to serve the public. As a frontline worker these cuts make our already difficult jobs, harder. We are already working with the barest of resources. Since the pandemic started, I have had to purchase my own Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to ensure my family, our clients and my fellow coworkers are safe. Our facility depends on a fully-staffed team to ensure our residents receive quality care and have a safe environment.

Mandatory furloughs put our clients and fellow coworkers at risk. We are all on the same road to recovery from this pandemic. Now is not the time to put more harm on the most vulnerable of our community by cutting services, furloughing workers or cutting our pay. You have already hired professionals who have experience with pandemics and situations like this. Utilize us, you have not had this situation before. We have been in this situation before, but no one has asked us for our experience in knowing how to deal with this.

CHRISTINE SAUNDERS (Policy Director, Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada):

The potential cuts to education are devastating. However, the State still has other options to not balance the budget on the backs of our children. Senate Bill No. 3, introduced this morning, requires for the prepayment of the net proceeds on minerals. As you have heard over the past few days, this is not enough, nor a long-term solution. We need to make mining corporations pay their fair share by removing their deduction. According to the most recent net proceeds on minerals, there are gross proceeds of over \$7 billion, yet because of the deductions, mining was able to reduce that by 70 percent when calculating proceeds and only paying taxes on \$2.3 billion. This sum only brought the State \$56 million in taxes. If the deductions were removed we could see well over double the revenue. Show Nevadans that we put people before corporations. Be bold and make real revenue reform this Session to set our children on a path to success.

ALEX BYBEE:

I have the honor of representing the Mission of Communities in Schools of Nevada. On behalf of our CEO and Board of Directors, we offer our empathy with those who have been elected to serve amidst one of our State's most challenging times. We thank you for your service, offer our gratitude for the thoughtfulness that went into these budget recommendations and lend our support. We are pleased to see the preservation of base funding, Victory and Zoom funding, which allows for increased support and interventions for low-income students and our bilingual learners.

In addition, we humbly request that this Body make every attempt to preserve Senate Bill No. 178 of the 79th Session funds. This is a critical funding source that brings us closer to equity particularly for our black students who we know stand at the intersection of systemic racism, which has been laid fair throughout the pandemic, and movement toward justice of the recent month. Given that our systems education, healthcare, housing and otherwise, fail to adequately meet the needs of our students of color, as evidenced by the gaps in statewide graduation rate data that shows black students are 12 points behind their peers graduating at a rate of 72 percent, while the statewide average is 84 percent. The preservation of these funds is essential in this moment.

Now, more than ever, we need to ensure that these critical wraparound services, interventions and the social-emotional needs of our children are met particularly those who are experiencing trauma whether directly or secondhand. We stand ready to partner on the relief and recovery efforts to ensure that we continue to educate and graduate all of Nevada's students. We are in this together as nonprofit, the government, citizens and industry. As our State Superintendent said this morning, we have to leverage our collective capacity for our students.

JOHN VELLARDITA (Executive Director, Clark County Education Association):

COVID-19 exposed the race and class inequity and two delivery systems in our State, education and healthcare. The hardest hit populations are working class minorities. Over 100,000 kids who were disenfranchised when CCSD closed down. None of them had the means or the home environment to do distance learning. The Governor's proposed cuts to education and healthcare hit that same population that have been victimized since COVID-19 arrived. Are we going to make cuts in education that target the most at-risk population? For those kids it will be a lost education, no doubt it will contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline. The Governor came out yesterday and said he does not want to lead on revenue. We took a poll recently and the public's expectation of their government is that they want leadership in times like these.

To the Senator from District 17, you care about our State and our people. You are a principle man. Do not allow others to pigeonhole you into being a contrarian.

Senator from District 16, you know this budget. You know the remnant structure, you are a solutions guy. Help this discussion around sound policy and not politics.

Senator from District 12, you have record of doing the right thing when times call for good policy. Like several of your colleagues, you supported former Governor Sandoval's Commerce Tax.

Senator from District 10, you know there are other solutions. Your heart has always been in the right place when it comes to the disadvantaged, as you did great things in healthcare.

Senator from District 13, in 2019, you were smart on moving a policy discussion on reforming one of our revenue streams, property tax, but politics buried that.

Senator from District 1, in 2015, you were bold and told former Governor Sandoval that you had a plan to raise revenue and introduced it, but your party was not in power.

Finally, to the Senator from District 6, please do not prosecute this agenda. Help lead with an alternative. Build a bipartisan approach to find revenue solutions, at least short-term ones. There are enough smart people in this Chamber to do great things for our State.

MICHELLE BOOTH (Educate Nevada Now):

Educate Nevada Now stands with other organizations who have called for the need for a serious discussion on developing a reliable and adequate revenue structure to meet the needs of Nevadans. We understand you face difficult decisions. Public education, like other essential government services, were already struggling to serve their communities prior to these proposed cuts. Now, they will be losing even more money and critical support.

As it relates to education, cuts to Senate Bill No. 178 of the 79th Session and other programs will directly impact the classroom, specifically for some of our most vulnerable students. We urge

you to follow through on the call for short-term emergency measures, but even then, this cannot be the new normal for our State. Nevada crumbles during times of national economic crisis. After more than 10 years, public-education funding has not achieved pre Great Recession levels when it adjusted for inflation. We cannot wait another 10 years only to find ourselves in a similar situation.

It is time to build a foundation that will not only help us weather the next crisis but will also put us on a path meeting the objectives we all agree will make our community stronger, such as equity for students and economic diversity. We appreciate how difficult this moment is for you, and we offer our full support in addressing the inadequate revenue that makes our State so vulnerable.

HEIKE RUEDENAUER:

I work for the Aging and Disability Services Division in the quality-assurance team for early intervention and ASAP. I am also a member of AFSCME Local 4041 Union. I would like to thank everyone for bringing up all the right questions and concerns during yesterday's and today's longest Session. It became clear that the people who would suffer most from the cuts are the ones who are already experiencing hardship. People of minority groups, people with disabilities, people who live in poverty, people who are sick, children, and so on. I appreciate the question varies concerning the workers who are passionately standing up for all Nevadans. How many kids can you shove into a classroom? How large can the caseload become? How much more needs to happen before employees who are now getting sick, quit or just give up. However, I feel that the questions are all the right ones, but the conclusions were not. If I cannot ... (unintelligible statement) ... in my household, then, of course, I can make cuts. I cancel my Internet. I sell my car and buy my groceries at the 99 cents store. However, there is a limit to the cuts I can make, I cannot just decide to sell my home and live under a bridge. I cannot walk around with one shoe because I used the money for the other one or for something else. I am not asking myself if I should stop feeding my little nephew, Robert, and stop feeding my new niece. This would not be budget planning. This would be a ticket to a catastrophe. Cuts can only go so far. When I am done cutting and I am still short, I look to see how I can make more money. This is what Nevada needs to do at this point. We cannot cut Medicaid. We cannot cut disabilities services or education. We cannot cut mental health or the prison systems. However, there are other ways of opening new lines of revenue.

I understand that these positions are not going to be popular, but they would ensure that the burden of the pandemic is distributed among all of us instead of putting it solely on the backs of the ones who keep the State up-and-running and the ones who are already in dire need while also ensuring to protect equity and social justice in the services we would provide.

I hope you are going to be brave enough for doing things differently this time around because we rely on you. Face it, if you only do what you have always done then we also only get what we always get.

TAHA MOKADDEM:

I wanted to talk about how the budget cuts for education K-12, I feel are really necessary. As previous callers had mentioned, mental health and mental-disability budget cuts will also affect people who are vulnerable especially in the time of Corona and COVID-19. I think it is really necessary, as always, even before this pandemic was happening and occurring, that we should take a serious look at education and what it means in Nevada. All of the education I have done in my life, K-12 and college, has always been in Nevada.

We are constantly reminded through our peers, or just through neighboring professors and in the news, that we are one of the last states in education. It feels like this is not the right move, especially in the pandemic, to further cut education and the resources that our most vulnerable community uses and relies on. The duty of this Committee is to ensure you are thinking about your communities as a whole. That includes the vulnerable ones and not just the ones who show for public comment, not just the ones that you are neighbors or friends with. That is important to remember. I hope we continue to take education, as well as a bunch of other services that are necessary for vulnerable communities across Nevada as a whole.

JIM FRAZEE:

I am a classroom teacher in Clark County and the incoming Vice President of TCEA, the largest educational union in the State representing the professionals responsible for educating 72 percent of Nevada's children. I understand this Special Session there are limits to what you can do, but you must fully understand what your actions mean. I am here to tell you what the real world consequences will be. In Clark County, the cuts you are voting on will mean the elimination of over 835 educational positions in what are already the most overcrowded classrooms in the Country. Last school year, I had a class with 43 students with only 41 desks. Today, during a pandemic, we have aligned the pendulum with social distancing you are proposing with these cuts that I have even larger classes.

You must stop this one-step forward two-step backwards approach to funding public education. Other states also face budget cuts because of this pandemic. They have prioritized their budgets to reflect their value. Utah and Florida have not balanced their budget on the backs of their children. In fact, they have increased education funding taking a more long-term view. Our students' parents and educators are no longer willing to be sacrificed for budgetary convenience. The clearer message that you and the Governor are sending with these cuts is that Nevada is closed to new businesses and the opportunity that comes with an expanded economy. We need new revenue going forward to rebuild Nevada's economy. When Governor Sisolak says he will not lead on new revenue, what he is saying is that he will not lead period. Our State needs bold leadership who is willing to work in a bipartisan way to rebuild our economy.

ALEXANDER MARKS (Nevada State Education Association):

Yesterday, July 8, nearly 1,000 educators from across the State lined the street at six feet apart outside of the building you are sitting in today in support of funding healthy schools. Yesterday was the first day in action, and we wish some of you could have joined us to see the movement that was taking place from the Legislature to the Capitol Building.

There is so much at stake right now to not have our voices heard. I am proud of our members who made signs and lined the streets in support of our schools. The Legislature has been equipped with plexiglass, free available hand sanitizers, masks, hands-free faucets, top-of-the-line HVAC systems and enough room to keep 63 Legislators safely distanced from each other. Every school building in this State should receive that same type of care before re-opening.

The future of Nevada's recovery runs through our schools. Cuts to education will compromise our ability to safely re-open, which will jeopardize the safety of students, educators and our communities. There is no return to normal, nor there should be. The State's approach to revenue in the past has never been sufficient and will not be while dealing with a crisis moving in a post-COVID-19 world. Further defunding public education without a plan for new revenue is not an acceptable answer. The NSEA and some of our allies are calling for a budgeting plan which includes at least \$1 of new revenue for any dollar that will be cut from public education.

YVETTE WILLIAMS (Chair, Clark County Black Caucus):

Historically, black students have had the greatest disparity in Nevada. About 70 to 75 percent of the black student population falls within the lowest 25 percentile. Not only do they have the least amount and, by the way, the only racial group in Nevada who is underrepresented in accessing CTE programs, Magnet, CTA programs and AP courses. They are overdisciplined and are racially isolated on campuses. The only two programs that really go directly to impacting a larger majority of African-American students are the two programs that are on the chopping block, Senate Bill No. 178 of the 79th Session and Read by Grade 3. Read by Grade 3 is very important because it protects and offers better access to literacy, and it holds districts accountable to make sure that students are reading by the third grade and not falling behind.

A recent Federal Court ruled that it is a constitutional right to literacy. The notion that somehow, equity has been used and funding of Zoom and Victory does not take into consideration the racial equitable funding. We are also questioning what the matrix has been, how were the decisions made in determining which programs would be slashed. We are asking that the rug not be pulled from underneath these vulnerable students. We are asking the Senate and the Assembly to find other ways to fund education in this State and not off the backs of our most vulnerable students who, for years, have advocated for fairness, some kind of education justice in making sure they have an equitable and a fair shot at achieving their educational dreams.

CARYNE SHEA (Hope for Nevada):

Thank you for your work toward addressing this severe situation in which there are no easy choices. We appreciate the work to keep Nevada's per pupil funding whole as well as Zoom and Victory programs. As for the \$183 million you are deliberating cutting, there are triage resources for children in our schools. When districts testified, they will try to continue these services, please know that means educators are being asked to do even more than they can even fathom right now with less than they have ever had. I ask you to think about former Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson who championed Read by Grade 3 to answer the need of nearly 70,000 fourth-grade children who cannot read at proficiency. If this necessary program is cut, we will lose all of the designated strategist to help tens of thousands of struggling students. If you cannot read, you cannot learn. Zoom and Victory programs leave the majority of our struggling students without any additional resources. This is why Senate Bill No. 178 of the 79th Session funds, now titled "New Nevada Education Dollars," was so celebrated in finally providing targeted intervention services for our lowest performing students in our State. Removing this money now compounds the struggles for students who are disproportionately students of color and experiencing poverty and are the same students that will struggle as schools open with virtual education in the fall and beyond.

With the largest class sizes in America, Nevada schools cannot afford any increases at a time when public-health mandates drastically limit capacity for the safety of children and staff. We ask you to consider changing the narrative for our State and for the Legislative Body. We ask you to collaborate as one Body to fix chronic and devastating systems that pillage from our future to get by in the present. The painful cuts that are being offered up to the legislative altar is not your only option if you are not afraid to act boldly and on behalf of others. It is not the tie to just fall in line. Now is the time to invest in education creating a better economy that will serve our citizenry and our future.

CLINTON TOLEDO:

I am calling to urge our Legislative Body to not make devastating cuts to our public education system. It seems to be that public education is always on the frontline when it comes to deep and devastating cuts. Leaving our children behind year after year after year and falling in line with states like Mississippi. Right now, our schools are on the frontlines of the COVID-19 crisis. We are expecting our teachers to go back to school without PPE, without the materials to meet the needs of our students and yet, discussions are being made to cutting funding to schools. This is wildly inappropriate. It puts the lives of our children, our staff, our professionals and our families at risk. We need to stand by public education now and the small gains that we started making in the last Legislative Session into 2022. We need to continue to work, instead of backtracking again and again. Right now, we can make a statement to the rest of the United States and to our communities that we value public education. We value our educators, and we value the children of the State of Nevada. Do not make any cuts to public education, period.

CHRIS DALY (Nevada State Education Association):

While the public is excluded from the Legislative Building, there is too much at stake to just stay home. That is why hundreds of educators lined the streets yesterday chanting, "Be brave, be bold, new revenue is the way to go." Any budget balancing initiative should include a dollar of new revenue for any dollar cut, a shared sacrifice. We recognize raising revenue is not easy. Not doing so will make it impossible for schools to follow State health-and-safety guidelines when reopening. For example, Nevada has the largest class size in the Country, and \$18 million slated for cuts should be used to help schools figure out distancing and overcrowded classrooms. Money cut from school equity programs are erasing years of work to meet the needs of our vulnerable communities. Like revenue is possible, while hundreds of thousands have lost their jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic, 11 Nevada billionaires saw their combined net worth jump over \$11 billion. Meanwhile, Nevada is the world's fifth largest producer of gold, which hit a nine-year high this week. Yet, the money industry paid little State taxes.

In terms of alternate cuts, over 60-million General Fund dollars were appropriated for student assessment like the ESSA Act for this fiscal year. This is an example of a possible cut that would actually make policy sense as the old accountability system is through assessment, full-star ratings, and evaluations that failed to foster improvement and achievements for the student

engagement they were intended to deliver. With a continued reliance on these old themes during COVID-19, the recent educators will have counterincentives to come to school when sick to teach the test instead of teaching and reinforcing health and safety and to maximize numbers and time in classrooms even when outside of the guidelines. Legislators, Senators be brave, be bold and do what is best for Nevada students.

MARIE NEISESS (President, Clark County Education Association):

We are the largest education union in Nevada. Madam President, distinguished Senators, for many years the children of Nevada have been shortchanged due to a lack of resources or by not having a fully-certified teacher. Now, as we face one of the biggest challenges impacting public education, the Governor is looking to make drastic cuts. He does not want to lead on raising new revenue. The devastating impact on education from the 2008 recession cannot be forgotten. Once again, our economy has been devastated because we rely on only two industries. The key to building a new economy is investing in public education and not making cuts. We need a more diversified economy. How can Nevada build a new economy without investing in public education? How can they attract new businesses that will provide new opportunities for the future of our children and our communities?

The Governor's supposed cuts will be detrimental to our students with the highest needs. Public education is supposed to provide an equitable opportunity for all students. Yet, these drastic cuts negatively impact our working-class minority students the most. By eliminating critical programs, our students with the highest needs will continue to fall further and further behind. Everyday educators do their best to make it work. This year proves to be the most challenging. Many educators were not prepared and lacked the technology needed to effectively provide virtual instruction. Many of our students were negatively impacted due to the lack of technology and Internet access.

Time and time again the burden of budget shortfalls have been put on the backs of students and educators. Now, more than ever, we need you to stand up and fight for our students' education. This is not to make this about party lines but rather a time to come together and do what is best for the children of Nevada.

NANCY WOOLF:

I am calling in to call for no new taxes. Every time the Democrats call for taxes that will help students, that money never gets to the students. It is a fake cry. Any Republican who votes for tax increases should walk out in November because we are watching. Do not believe the lies that money will get to students. There are countless examples where that has not occurred.

DEXTER LIM:

Good afternoon. I am a youth organizer primarily for environmental justice in Nevada. Finding solutions for the COVID or the economic crisis would be difficult on their own, let alone having them occur in tandem much like they are now. I am asking you to tackle both by making our mines pay their fair share. It has been unjust for far too long already, and there is no better time as we need revenue. I am asking my Legislators if you paid barely 1 percent of taxes like Nevada mining corporations do, would that fair in your opinion? Would you just expect your constituents to accept that without some sort of conversation? Mines ravage our unique ecosystem and do not contribute a fair amount in return. The mining deductions are right there, and you have the power to remove them. Do the right thing rather than slashing our already exhausted resources like healthcare, education and transport. Show that you care not only about our people but also about our environment.

STEPHANIE DUBE:

I am a custodial worker at Desert Willow Treatment Center, a psychiatric treatment center for youth in southern Nevada. I am also a member of AFSCME Local 4041. Desert Willow is an inpatient facility, and we must stay open to treat some of Nevada's most vulnerable youth. That makes me a frontline employee. I have continued to show up and do my part to ensure these young people get the treatment they need in a safe and clean environment. The economic impact of the COVID-19 public-health crisis will be long-lasting in Nevada. Public services and public service workers like me will be hard hit when difficult budget decisions are made this week. We have

been here before. Just ten years ago, Nevada State Employees were asked to do more with less and give up some of their financial security to keep services from being cut. State employees have always been asked to make sacrifices. To give up some of our pay, which I want everyone to know we definitely are not overpaid, while corporations have enjoyed over \$1.6 billion in subsidies over the past ten years including \$60 million in 2019 alone. Last Session, Governor Sisolak vetoed cuts to corporate subsidies. Now, the Governor can work with you, the Legislature, to make corporations share in the sacrifices. Our communities deserve better.

SONJA WHITTEN:

I am a proud member of AFSCME Local 4041 with over 16 years of service to my community as a State of Nevada employee. I oppose any of the cuts proposed to this Committee and by Governor Sisolak. Senate Bill No. 135 of the 80th Session gave State of Nevada employees collective bargaining rights and allows us the right to negotiate over any changes to our working conditions. Governor Sisolak failed to meet us at the bargaining table to negotiate these proposed cuts, therefore not following the policies set forth in the laws created by Senate Bill No. 135 of the 80th Session. Having suffered through the Great Recession, the cuts to the services we provide, cuts to our pay through furloughs, loss of merit-step increases and longevity pay and increases to our healthcare costs, it was a very demoralizing time. These cuts amounted to paying a special tax because I chose a career as a public servant. I ask the respective Bodies of the Nevada Legislature to mandate that Governor Sisolak honor the tenets of Senate Bill No. 135 of the 80th Session and meet AFSCME Local 4041 members at the bargaining table to negotiate budget changes that are equitable to our community and State of Nevada employees. Cutting services is not the way to help our communities recover from the devastating effects of this pandemic. If cuts are made to education, State workers and community services, I ask each Legislator to look at the tax breaks corporations such as Tesla, Switch and mining have received. At what point will these corporations be asked to contribute their fair share to Nevada?

LACKYN KELLEY:

I am a concerned citizen of Las Vegas. I attended K-12 and college. I was reminded regularly how bad my education was here. It makes me feel disadvantaged, and there are far more disenfranchised individuals than myself. I want to emphasize the importance of education and its cascading effects on the prosperity of our society as a whole. We are forty-fifth in education in the Country according to *U.S. News and World Report*. I have absolutely no idea why education is considered for future cuts when it needs more funds to begin with. It is absolutely unacceptable, moving forward, and it is as easy as that. As a Vegas native, I love our city, but it is hard to justify having children here without quality education for them. Please ask mining to pay their fair share to assist this budget gap. It is passed time for this. We are taxpayers, and we want education. Be brave.

SYLVIA LAZOS:

I am on the Education Committee for the Nevada Immigrant Coalition. I want to express my gratitude and my pride that the Nevada Senate has been so thoughtful and so thorough in thinking about this education budget. It is a difficult budget, and there are many cuts there that none of us want to see. I want to express my gratitude that the Governor's budget includes and continues to support Zoom and Victory.

For the record, Zoom covers 44,000 students; 88 percent are students of color, 17 percent are African American and 71 percent are Latinx.

The Victory program covers 21,000 students; 88 percent are students of color, 23 percent are African American and 65 percent are Latinx.

I want to emphasize that these are children who are in the poorest zip codes all over the State, all the way from the Winnemucca Reservations to our prime six schools in Clark County to Hug High school which is the oldest high school in the State.

Because of these programs these children have been given the opportunity to succeed. The DOE has, three times, found that these programs are making significant progress and giving these children significant opportunities. These are schools that previously had failed and now have been turned around. Former Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson's own Valley High School is now a three-star school.

We ask you to continue to support Victory and Zoom. I am proud of the support that we have received in 2013 and 2015 that was bipartisan for this program. The Senators from Districts 2, 5, 8, 21, 11, 1, 18, 12 and 16, all of you saw the merit in helping the poorest children. These are the ones who now have COVID infections at an all-time high and elude to have access to broadband. They will receive the kind of support they need through Victory and Zoom. Thank you for preserving this program. There are many more meritorious programs, but this certainly is a big step toward being in charge of our blueprint to solve social justice and reform justice.

AUTUMN TAMPA:

I echo my fellow education speaker. The COVID-19 global crisis has impacted the entire world. It has left no country and no state in our Union untouched. It is heart-wrenching and disconcerting. It is scary. It is confusing, and it has damaged our economy. The Nevada Legislature is faced with critical decisions that will impact every Nevada resident and citizen, including many who are not as able to speak for themselves, senior citizens, the disabled, the mentally ill, the homeless and our children. As the representatives of the citizens of Nevada, you have the formidable responsibility to protect the safety and well-being of all Nevada citizens. You will need to make sure the homeless, senior citizens and mentally ill are cared for. You will need to stabilize the economy while keeping our children safe and ensuring they get the best possible education that the COVID-19 crisis allows.

I have worked at CCSD for over 21 years and never has there been enough steady revenue to do the job it is required to do, to educate our children. To reopen Nevada schools safely, it is critical to have safety protocols, adequate personal protective gear and supplies in place to keep children and those that teach and oversee their education safe. All of this takes money.

As you consider this budget, please remember our children. I ask that you keep an open mind and an open heart. Consider the most vulnerable and needy with greater weight. Consider the long-term impacts and consequences versus the short-term gains and goals. Think outside the box and set aside political agendas when considering cuts. Even though unpopular, create sources of additional revenue to cover this shortfall and the one to come.

JOSHUA ZERBEL:

I am a retired CSUN College of Sciences Senator and current undergraduate at UNLV. I am speaking today in relation to the budget cuts to NSHE and the concurrent addition of student-fee surcharge. I understand cuts need to be made during these turbulent times and I understand, to a degree, adding additional fees. However, something that has not been discussed within NSHE, and specifically at UNLV, are the things administration could do to help alleviate possible charges that will crop up during the move to a majority remote-instruction model. I would like to see an administration mandate that professors cannot use third-party homework/testing services that can cost upward of \$50 per semester and must use the free Web Campus platform. I would also like to note that every time NSHE has had to talk about their budget within even the slightest bit of specifics, they fumble on their words and always skirt around the question. This is no coincidence. From the contract bidding procedures to the self-supporting budgets, NSHE fails to perform. We are trying to strive for Tier 1 status on a foundation that is completely reactive and never proactive. Please put Thom Reilly and Andrew Clinger on paths to justifying the additional fees.

REBECCA GARCIA (President, Nevada Parent Teacher Association):

As you participate in this Special Session, you are faced with immense challenges and decisions that will be difficult. Today, I ask that you, our elected leaders, to protect public education for our children and make critical decisions to invest in Nevada's future.

The proposed cuts ... (unintelligible statement) ... in America. My children regularly have 35 to 40 students in their classes. The proposed cuts would effectively eliminate hundreds of teaching positions across the State mostly focused on our students' with the highest need.

It is virtually impossible to meet public-health mandates now and will become less attainable. In the current public-health crisis, it will cost more, not less to effectively and safely deliver instruction to students this fall yet, a decade after the Great Recession, Nevada education still suffers from a 17-percent deficit in un-restored cuts from the last recovery. While these cuts may be seen as the least painful of the choices, trimming the already meager school budget will still impact students and strip away many of the gains put in place by this Body in recent Sessions. The

proposed cuts would substantially undermine support for reading, a vital key to learning and critical intervention for the lowest performing students. These cuts would fall disproportionately on the same children for whom distance learning has been impossible and are the most at need.

As a chair of two SOP's in Clark County, these cuts are not just numbers on a page to me, they are my children's teachers and services that my kids have relied on during distance learning and look forward to when we return. At this critical time, our kids need more resources, not less. Every child in every zip code across Nevada must receive educational resources that every child will need to succeed in school now and in their future life. This Special Session will be over quickly, but now is the time to invest in education for our children, for our economic recovery, and for our future. We stand by to work with you and support efforts that serve all children in our State.

WILLIAM TOLEDO:

I am a Professor of Education at UNR. I am calling to speak out against any cuts to education that would negatively impact our teachers, our students, our families or other education professionals serving at our school sites. Right now, this is a critical time to invest in our schools, to rethink schools and re-imagine what we can do in our public schools.

Before I was a professor, I was a public school teacher for four years. I am a teacher/educator. Working with Washoe County School District, which is our local school district, is the highlight of my career. I feel deeply invested in our schools and our classrooms. It is discouraging to see that the educational budget is number two on the list right under DHHS, which is also discouraging, as something that needs to be cut. We are asking more of our teachers, not less. We are asking more of our families and our students in terms of trusting district and school boards to make difficult decisions in the age of COVID-19. In my opinion, I personally do not think schools should be reopening. If they are reopening, even at a hybrid model, my biggest request is that we invest in PPE for teachers and students because we need to keep everyone in school safe.

We need to make sure that we do not touch teachers' salaries. Teachers are already underpaid and overworked, and that money cannot be touched. You cannot ask teachers to take furlough days or other educational professional days. If we are on a hiring a freeze, that also concerns me because we will be reducing the number of students in classrooms, and we will not have qualified adults to teach them. My biggest request is that any cuts to education not be ones that impact our classrooms, our teachers or anyone else at our school sites.

KEN EDMONDS:

I am a developmental support tech at Desert Regional Center (DRC) and a proud member of AFSCME Local 4041. Yesterday, you heard from the DHHS administrators about how cuts to this agency will hurt the most vulnerable in our communities. At DRC I work with some of the most vulnerable in our communities, Nevadans with severe developmental, intellectual and mental disabilities. As a frontline employee, we already work with limited resources, and these cuts will cause even more hardships to our communities. Cuts are not the only solution. I urge the Legislature and Governor Sisolak to stand up for everyday Nevadans and make changes to the taxes that allow corporations to skim by on their taxes. When times are tough, our communities take the hit with cuts to services. This Committee has the power to make sure that corporations share in the sacrifice and pay their fair share in taxes.

TREY DELAP (Executive Director, Nevada Center for Civic Engagement):

We run the "We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution" program in Nevada's elementary, middle and high schools. In 2019, Senate Bill No. 193 from the 80th Session appropriated \$175,000 for each year of the biennium. We have received our first year of funds, but we have been zeroed out in the proposed reductions for 2021. With our funding, and by the end of July, we will have trained 67 elementary, middle and high school teachers in the "We the People" curricula through our PDE program. This is double the number of teachers trained in the prior year. We cover all curriculum costs for each teacher including their training, textbooks and e-books for all of their students. By necessity, we have already adapted to the virtual delivery of our PDE program. Virtual capacity also solved the ever-present problem of connecting rural and ... (unintelligible statement) ... schools to our urban areas. Now, we can deliver PDE curriculum or even hold a competition to any school in the State with an Internet connection. None of this can happen without dedicated staff. Last year, 563 students from 28 high schools competed in district

competitions statewide. Over 1,000 Nevadans are directly touched by high school "We the People" alone. Our program facilitates the critical reflection of citizenship by training teachers to challenge their students to consider what are the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a Republic. By studying history and Supreme Court cases, teachers become facilitators as a team of students learn by practicing complex, argument construction, analysis, research, teamwork, empathy and resiliency. I cannot imagine a more critical time to prepare our young people of our reflective citizenship.

Today, we need young people to be critical of evidence to survive this pandemic. Nevada is Battle Born and resilient. We can do so much with little, but we cannot do anything with nothing. Please help preserve your public investment in preparing young Nevadans for their civic responsibility.

VALERAA GURR (State Director, Nevada School Choice Coalition):

I am a first-generation immigrant, and my mother did not know how to read when I was growing up. This meant she could not help me with my homework. I was bullied at school, and other kids would make fun of me because I did not understand what I was being taught. Many families that come to my organization are coming to look for help. These are Hispanic, low-income families that face the same struggles that my mother faced when I was growing up. Our minority students need programs like Read by Grade 3 so children can succeed. Our organization is joining the efforts of other state advocates in this State against cuts for K-12 education system. We should be using this crisis as a reason to expand our investment in education. Other states like Utah, Florida, California and Louisiana not only reduced cuts for K-12 education but also increased funds. Florida expanded their school options for their vulnerable communities. Please do not make cuts. Invest in our communities that need it most.

JANA PLEGGENKUHLE:

I am an educator at CCSD and a member of CCEA. I am speaking today as an individual. Thank you, Legislators, for your time. I realize we are in unprecedented times, but as Legislators, you all need to be brave and do what is right. We acknowledge you have a daunting task at hand. I understand that Nevada DOE and districts did the best they could coming up with the cuts that the Governor asked for, but education in Nevada is already underfunded. We cannot go backwards even during these difficult times. The time is now to come up with a way to improve funding in our State. We can no longer rely primarily on gaming, tourism and the small amount from local taxes. It is time to look at the mining industry or other industries that have not done their share. Money can be found if you truly make tough changes. I know this is not popular, but we are counting on you to do what is right even though it is unpopular. I ask you look back into the 1989 Legislative Session and see what they were able to do with the mining industry to bring more income into Nevada. Our students, our future, cannot survive more cuts. Now is not the time for politics as usual. We are all depending on you to do something that is radical for the good of the whole State. Please do not just talk; we need to see action.

SONIA KRETSCHMER:

I am a high school teacher in the Washoe County School District. I would like to thank you for your time today. Taking money from class-size allocation funds is wrong and harms students in our already overcrowded classes. Instead, the funds should be taken from Flexible Learning Options (FLOs) and other assessments as these are not an accurate reflection of student learning especially during the hybrid models. Teachers have more on their plates than ever before. We now have added cleaning duties in our own classrooms and developing new and innovative curriculum to students attending a hybrid model this coming school year. Although I do not agree that taking any further funds from education is the right move, if this must be done, take from areas that will not affect the learning of students during this difficult time. Our assessments during the best of times are overlapping and unnecessary. Results are not given in a timely manner and do not give teachers accurate information about their current students. Keeping these assessments during these unprecedented times would be detrimental to the education of our youth and be a further strain on our overworked teachers.

Finally, I would like to echo a previous comment that new revenue needs to be included in these discussions. A one-for-one dollar raise for every dollar cut needs to be a priority for the State of Nevada.

MICHAEL DUFF:

I looked at a report that was done for the Legislature in the last biennium. In Fiscal Year 2016 alone, the Governor's Office of Economic Development did over a billion dollars in taxes to corporations. Over 10 years, that is probably \$100 million annually, but they do that every year for about a decade. I have worked in economic development, maybe not at that level because that is why Fiscal Year 2016 was higher for various reasons. Still, that is a lot of money.

These cuts are horrible. A fair solution is to ask the people who receive tax incentives to pay full taxes for the duration of the pandemic in exchange for, if it lasts a year, if it lasts two years, then they get a year, if it last two years, then they get three years or four years or whatever. They get one year extra for every year they pay taxes now on the backend. It does not raise taxes for my Republican friends in the State Senate. It cuts their taxes over the long run. If they would refi their bonds and refi their loans, it would not impact them that much. It would raise hundreds of millions of dollars to alleviate these cuts. We need innovative solutions like that. Maybe it costs you all the election. I have ran for office and lost before. One of my mentors said, "You know, there are worst things in life than losing an election," when I worked an election and he lost. He is right.

People are not going to remember, to paraphrase Abraham Lincoln, how long you served in the State Senate. People are going to ask 20, 30 and 40 years ago, what you did at this historic moment. They are going to ask what you did now and here. I hope you will do the right thing.

CARYN NEIDHOLD:

I am a teacher in the Washoe County School District. Nevada leaders, it is time to get creative. Every point of the education budget should be directly impacting the classroom and keeping our educational system afloat. Immediate financial and educational impacts should be the ultimate directive and decision-making point for funding for our children and our State's future. The FLOs have a long-term impact. Cuts are not more important than sufficient textbooks for each student. Temporarily suspend funds for FLOs and put these funds back in the classroom. Standardized tests help plan long-term education but are not more important than PPE for frontline teachers. Temporarily suspend funds for standardized tests and put it back in the classroom. Star Ratings are a metric of school success but not more important than counselors, librarians and all support personnel. Temporarily suspend funds for Star Ratings and put it back in the classroom. Classroom-size funding should not be touched, this funding is not about how many students physically fit in a classroom but about time, how much time a teacher has for these first important years of school. Keep these funds. You are the Admirals of a sinking ship. We have struggled for years and years with inadequate funds and cuts to our children's education and consequently their future. Education will not cost less in our current pandemic; it will cost more. It is time to use your knowledge, ability, ingenuity and resources to make sure our children are not left to sink.

SELENA LA RUE:

I am a social studies teacher, and I am calling to express my abject incredulity that we are contemplating cutting funds from critical education programs such as class-size reduction in the midst of a pandemic. We need smaller class sizes in the upcoming school year to keep kids socially distanced within the classroom, much like you are doing in the Legislature right now. Yet, this Body is cutting the very funds that allow us to limit class sizes. We cannot cut these funds and keep our kids safe at the same time. This decision hampers our ability to educate children and endangers our children. The easiest and most widely supported option you have is to raise new revenue. Educators have already sacrificed enough for our kids. It is time for the wealthiest citizens and corporations to share in this sacrifice. Please, be brave and bold in finding new revenue.

I recognize with the revenue discussion, we may still be required to make cuts. In the spirit of cooperation, I offer a compromise: instead of cutting vital programs like class-size reduction and Read by Grade 3, put a moratorium on FLOs, STAR Rating and standardized testing for the upcoming year. Assessments alone represent \$16 million annual. This one change would mean we could keep the funds for class-size reduction. If you add in the costs for FLOs and STAR Rating, we could keep vital programs that directly impact our kids in the classroom.

Teaching and learning will not be the same next year. We will have to assess and fill in the gaps from the previous school year and navigate new digital curriculums as well as address children's social and emotional needs with their lives in flux. Due to these dramatic changes, these evaluation programs will produce wildly inaccurate data for this year and represent an inappropriate burden on students, educators and parents. Put a moratorium on FLOs, STAR Rating and standardized testing this year and make sound policy-sense decisions from both fiscal and ethical perspectives. This is a policy you could pass with a clear conscience knowing what is right for our kids.

DORA MARTINEZ:

I am having a party with my children. They wanted to hear how the Senate is doing with the budget cuts in regards to the incoming school year. I want to inform the Body to be mindful of those students who have Individualized Education Program (IEP). They have not seen their IEP counselor to come and meet with them. They are lagging behind as well as those who are minority children and living in poverty. It is the thirtieth and ... (unintelligible statement) ... we want to make sure that it is about us without us. We want to make sure you are aware that we are here listening and seeing this play out. We want you to be mindful that Nevada's education is ... (unintelligible statement) ... the whole State, the whole Nation. We do not want our children who need these vital services to fall further behind.

CORY HARWELL:

I want to encourage our State Legislature. This is a fragile time in the history of our State and Country. The job you are tasked with this Special Session is an unenviable one. You are faced with addressing budget shortfalls and the future of this State. How are we going to tackle the epidemic? How are we going to educate our children and encourage growth of our businesses and all the things that come with the decisions you are about to make? I would encourage you to remember the definition of "liberty" and what it means to us and our Country. There is a reason why life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are the three things spoken about so wonderfully. Liberty, that freedom for no confinement, freedom for lack of restriction and freedom from the burdensome choking of overdue taxes and incredible taxation.

I am a small business owner in Las Vegas, have a small restaurant with about 46-47 employees. One of the things we are trying to do is use the capital resources we have to try to grow our business and face the challenges in front of us head on. I am confident that if our Legislature will find the funds they need in other areas, other than increasing taxes on small businesses, we will be able to navigate these waters together. If you increase those taxes and put that chokehold on our businesses, I fear what our future looks like. What will my 46-47 employees' futures look like? I do not envy the task you are faced with, but I encourage you to not fix it with burdensome taxes on small businesses.

PATRICIA UNRUH:

I am calling on behalf of myself, and my brother who is a Washoe County School District public teacher. I serve with ACTIONN and serve as Vice Chair on the Statewide Independent Living Council. COVID-19 has exposed the brokenness and injustices of our systems in society. The State Legislature must divest from broken systems and invest in a "new normal" that puts people first. The Nevada Legislature needs to lead boldly and respond to this historic moment by transforming the status quo, not returning to it. We must divest from corrupt systems and invest in community resources. COVID-19 has exposed gaps in education and low-income students of color, who are the consequence. The State Legislature must divest from the corporate systems that drain us and invest in our students.

VERA MILLER:

The burden of crisis and sacrifice should fall on all of our shoulders with equity, meaning those least in taxes must take up most of the burden. All corporate entities such as mining and Tesla should take up this burden. Severely impacted and marginalized people should take on the least amount of burden and have the most amount of ... (unintelligible statement). It is wrong to consistently demand of our health and education services to make the sacrifices ... (unintelligible statement). It is wrong putting our health and education on the chopping block first above ... (unintelligible statement) ... entities and above corporations like mining and Tesla. It is wrong.

You talk about how hard this decision is to make and you have no options, but you do. You have the power and the ability to change this. Do not make us suffer because we will, and we already are.

We are in the throes of climate crisis, and COVID is encapsulated in that. We keep running into crisis after crisis. This virus might be with us longer than we could ever anticipate. The punches will keep coming. Health and education are not optional luxuries that we can cut away. Again, I talk about Miciah Lee. Would he be, here, with us today if we had adequate funding for mental-health services and education, if police did not exist and suicide by cops was not a reliable way to commit suicide?

KEEGAN BOSIER:

I have been a teacher in the Washoe County School District for four years. The Department of Employment Training and Rehabilitation (DETR) shows around 50 percent of teachers quit within their first five years. I do not want to be part of that population. Cutting the budget pushes teachers like me to that decision. I ask that you support teachers like me in these times. How? Ensure we can support our students in the best possible manner. I ask that you do not make budget decisions that will harm students. Ensure class sizes do not increase whether we are physically in the classroom or online. Teachers will be stretched thin by new sanitation requirements and distance-learning curriculums. With this in mind, remove the requirements and funding for things like the FLOs. Teacher time needs to be spent working with students and not forms and bureaucracy in evaluation. Funding for mandatory State assessments do not help our students. When we take budget dollars away from education, you put more on educators who are already stretched thin. Your decisions have real life consequences. The State will lose teachers to retirements and moving to different sectors.

One last thought, the Legislature and our districts are not meeting in person and choosing to meet virtual. Yet, teachers are asked to risk their health and return to school with budgets cut.

JARED BUSKER (Associate Director, Children's Advocacy Alliance):

Children's Advocacy Alliance is a statewide, nonprofit organization that is the independent voice for Nevada's children. Today, I wanted to briefly mention our concerns and to the availability of childcare and after-school care for our children. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, Nevada's early childhood capacity is at 23 percent of the need for children between the ages of 0 through 5. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, Nevada has seen over 50 percent of our childcare providers shut their doors, the vast majority of which were childcare centers. While this ... (unintelligible statement) ... CARES Act dollars is supporting providers, but only 22.5 percent of licensed providers received funding. As our school district works to reopen in the fall using a hybrid, back-to-school model with our children being off for three days a week, we have some concerns regarding who will be providing care for our children while their parents are working. We urge the Legislature to consider this as you continue to discuss potential reductions in the pre K-12 budget. Think of the best way to reopen in the fall. We urge the Senate to review all potential revenue options prior to making these cuts on the backs of our children again.

SENATOR CANNIZZARO:

We will open the hearing for a presentation by Nevada System of Higher Education.

THOM REILLY (Chancellor, Nevada System of Higher Education):

Members of the Senate, thank you for allowing us to present our budget-reduction plan. The Board of Regents had two public meetings to approve NSHE budget-reduction recommendations to the Governor. The first was on April 10 to approve budget proposals up to 14 percent for Fiscal Year 2021. The second was during the June 11th and 12th meetings to approve an additional 5 percent for Fiscal Year 2021. It is important to note that each of the presidents worked closely with their faculty and students in developing their budget-reduction proposals. The Chair and I met with all of the elected faculty leaders and all of the elected student leaders to come up with these budget-reduction proposals. They were all approved unanimously by the Board of Regents.

Total Fiscal Year 2021 operating budget reductions for Fiscal Year 2021 are \$109.6 million or 16 percent of our General Fund appropriation. These reductions are in addition to an estimated

\$120.9 million impact the COVID-19 pandemic will have on institution revenues and additional expenditures.

I will bundle the reductions together in three of four different areas. The first component will be the CARES Act. These federal dollars went directly to each of our institutions. The Nevada System of Higher Education collectively and initially received \$59.9 million in CARES Act funds. Fifty percent, or \$29.9 million, went to students as emergency financial aid. The other \$29.9 million was used to offset a portion of the State budget reduction. Of the portion that went to students, the federal intent was that those monies be spent quickly and widely. Each institution developed criteria for that. Some cases we received the money on a Friday, and we were distributing the funds on a Monday. For the most part, all of those dollars apportioned to the students have been spent. Some of the institutions have a very small amount of dollars that are used for emergency assistance. Initially, we had some concerns about whether we could use the nonstudent portion to offset these budget reductions. After several consultations and webinars with the federal government, we are confident that we can do so.

The second area would be the hiring freeze and operating reductions. On March 16th, per the Governor's request, NSHE instituted a system-wide hiring freeze and established a process for exceptions which require the Chancellor's approval. Part of the budget reduction for Fiscal Year 2021 include holding positions vacant at each of the institutions resulting in \$24.1 million in savings. Institutions have been granted the flexibility to determine which positions to keep vacant to meet reserved targets based on the individual needs of each campus. Campuses have also identified \$7.4 million in operating and travel reductions. There are exemptions in this area for staffing that deal with instruction.

We have been tracking our enrollment vigilantly on a weekly basis, and we are not looking real bad. At the universities we are flat, if not a little bit up, and several of our community colleges have an projected increase projected for the fall.

The next area comprises our budget-reduction proposal and deals with a temporary student surcharge. After the April 10th meeting, the Board of Regents approved a temporary student surcharge in the event 14 percent, or more, of the budget reductions were required. The surcharge is a per-credit charge of \$6 for undergraduates at the universities, \$8 for graduate students, \$5 for students at NSC and \$3 at the community colleges. The surcharge is projected to generate \$10.1 million in additional revenue for Fiscal Year 2021. The surcharge represents less than 3 percent of the registration fees at each institution.

The next area that comprises our budget-reduction proposal deals with the market fluctuation distribution. At our June 11th and 12th Board meetings, the Board approved a \$50-million allocation from our Market Fluctuation Account to offset an additional 5 percent in budget reductions that we were asked to compile. The Market Fluctuation Account was established after the Great Recession to finance monthly investment distributions to campuses in the event that the System does generate sufficient earnings. The Market Fluctuation Account, which was established in 2010, is part of NSHE's operating pool of 23,000-plus accounts across the System. These funds are invested in equities, bonds and cash. The earnings on each of these funds is distributed back to the campuses based on each institution's balance. The Market Fluctuation Account was initially funded from investment earnings, which were not distributed back to the campuses. The distribution we used to offset \$35.2 million in budget reductions. The distribution of these funds could impact the ability of the System to distribute investment income if we see another significant downturn in the stock market. I would like to mention, in fact, during the last Legislative Session, we did note in our presentation a similar distribution of dollars to our institutions to cover some of the deferred maintenance holes that we had at many of our institutions.

Lastly, the administrative and academic faculty furlough savings are not included in the \$1.96-million cuts presented to you today but was a recommendation by the Board of Regents. The proposal was to furlough professional staff for 6 days per year at the 10-percent cut level and 12 days per year at the 14-percent level. We estimated that the implementation of 12 furlough days for professional staff at NSHE would save \$21.2 million for Fiscal Year 2021. The furlough reduction is not included in our total reduction to the Governor requesting that 12 furlough days for all State employees including our professional staff. The numbers I just referred to deal with professional staff and not the classified staff. The only other comment I would make on the furloughs is the Board recommended the 12 furlough days for all of our staff. Both the President

and I took another 6 days of furlough for a total of 18 furlough days as part of our budget-reduction proposal.

With me today is the Chief Financial Officer Andrew Clinger as well as the Presidents from each of our institutions to answer any questions the Senate might have.

SENATOR DENIS:

From what you just presented, is there anything in this budget that will preclude students from not being able to go?

CHANCELLOR REILLY:

We had two primary guiding principles when we put together our budget-reduction proposal. One is that we did not want to lay off any staff. It is important to note that during the whole spring semester, we kept all of our staff and students employed. Students who worked in our recreation centers that were closed, we kept employed. We, and the Board of Regents felt there were enough people unemployed in this State and thought it was important to keep all of our staff and others employed. The second was to protect any financial aid and support that we have for students. These are deep cuts. We went to great lengths to ensure that we were not impacting any ability of students to continue with financial aid.

SENATOR DENIS:

Yesterday, we received presentations from the Governor's Office. One of the cuts that showed up on the sheets was the Promise Scholarship. Can you talk about that, and where we are on that?

CHANCELLOR REILLY:

I can, and then I will turn it over to CFO Andrew Clinger. The initial cuts were carryover dollars for the Nevada Promise program. The funds we have right now will actually get us through the fall. If those cuts did go into place, then, we would not have any money in the spring for the students we left in. There have been conversations with the Governor's Office about the transfer of some of their Federal Cares dollars to ensure we fill that hole. With that, Andrew, could you jump in on that?

ANDREW CLINGER (Chief Financial Officer, Nevada System of Higher Education):

I had a conversation with the Governor's Finance Office Director, Susan Brown, about Nevada Promise. We discussed that the reductions would get us through the fall, and part of the solution is using CARES Act dollars. We received a direct allocation of CARES Act dollars, as the Chancellor went through. The Governor received some of their own CARES Act dollars, and we are eligible for reimbursements from the Governor's CARES Act dollars. We have been submitting our expenditures to the Governor's Office, as all of the other agencies have. What Susan and I discussed was they would reimburse us for those COVID-19-related expenditures out of their CARES Act dollars which would then free up funds for scholarships in the spring semester.

SENATOR DENIS:

So, the CARES Act dollars would be spent in the first semester in the fall.

MR. CLINGER:

We would use the funds within the Promise Program for the fall semester. We, then, would use freed-up, State budget dollars, because of the reimbursement from the Governor's Office CARES Act dollars, to fund the program in the spring.

SENATOR DENIS:

There are no issues with the CARES Act money needing to be expended by the end of the year? Are there any of those kinds of issues?

MR. CLINGER:

I do not believe so. We can get reimbursement this calendar year, and we have been submitting expenditures. We will have more as the year goes on. I have not tracked the Governor's CARES Act dollars well enough to know if they have to reimburse us by the end of the year. When and if they do, that will free up our State dollars and will allow us to carry that into the spring to fund those scholarships.

SENATOR DENIS:

Are you saying that arrangement is confirmed with the Governor's Office?

MR. CLINGER:

That arrangement has been confirmed with the Governor's Finance Office Director Brown, and I spoke about that yesterday on the telephone.

CHANCELLOR REILLY:

Senator, thank you for asking about those dollars. They are very important.

SENATOR CANCELA:

I have a couple of questions related to the CARES ACT dollars. You touched on a couple of these, Chancellor Reilly, but I want to make sure it is clear for the record. The first relates to the per-credit surcharge. Is that reimbursable to students through emergency CARES Act student aid, or has that money already been paid out?

CHANCELLOR REILLY:

Those dollars have already been paid out. The federal intent of those dollars was that they would be distributed as soon and widely as possible. Each of our institutions developed criteria to allow that to happen and distribute those dollars right away. Except for a few institutions that have kept a tiny bit of money for some emergencies in the fall, those CARES Act dollars have already been distributed.

SENATOR CANCELA:

I know there was a little bit. I received a message, as a former UNLV student, that there was about \$1 million of unclaimed CARES Act dollars still out there. I appreciated all of the work the University is doing to make sure students did the logistics to claim those dollars.

The second question, and this is just clarifying the \$60 million in Federal CARES Act funding has been received in full to the NSHE. Is that accurate?

CHANCELLOR REILLY:

I will defer to CFO Clinger. We received all of our student dollars because we distributed those. The rest of those dollars have come in.

MR. CLINGER:

We have collected the student portion of the CARES Act dollars. We have not yet started collecting, what I call, the institution portion, which is \$29.9 million that we are using to offset cuts. We have not started collecting that. We have through the end of the calendar year to account for that. Let me rephrase that. Expenditures through the end of the calendar year are eligible for reimbursement. We have until June 30th of next year to actually collect those dollars.

SENATOR CANCELA:

Because those additional resources will be used to replace State funding, correct me if I am misunderstanding, will those funds be budgeted in the NSHE, State-supported budget proportionate to those reductions?

MR. CLINGER:

That is a great question. As we discuss this with the institutions, because of the rigorous reporting requirement that the federal government has put on these funds, we have opted to create separate accounts for each institution to track these dollars separately so we can meet the federal reporting requirements.

SENATOR CANCELA:

I know the CARES Act dollars are the big bulk of federal dollars out there. Are you aware of institutions themselves or of this System pursuing any other federal resources that could help offset some of the budget challenges or allow for new programming that would have otherwise required General Fund dollars?

CHANCELLOR REILLY:

The medical school applied for one of the loans that can be forgiven. Mr. Clinger, do you know of any other funding that we have applied for at this point?

MR. CLINGER:

I do not have a list of those, but we can certainly get that information to you. They have been applying for federal grants. Most of those are reimbursing them for additional expenditures due to COVID-19. They are not helping to offset budget reductions. As I stated earlier, we submit on a weekly basis COVID-related expenditures to the Governor's Office in hopes to be refunded for those through the Governor's CARES Act dollars. There is also FEMA dollars that are available. We are looking at applying for those. For those funds that we do not get reimbursed through the Governor's Office, we will apply for funds for FEMA reimbursement. These are expenditures that would be in addition to our State budget due to the challenges our institutions are facing.

MARC JOHNSON, PH.D. (President, University Nevada, Reno):

The University of Nevada, Reno, hosts the Small Business Development program with offices across the entire State. That unit has received some additional funds related to COVID to assist with a distribution of funds for small businesses in Nevada.

MARTA MEANA, PH.D. (President, University of Nevada, Las Vegas):

The University of Nevada, Las Vegas, faculty practice plan did apply for a payment-protection-plan loan, which was aimed at maintaining payroll for our faculty whose almost entire salaries are dependent on clinical revenue, which dropped to almost zero during the COVID crisis.

SENATOR CANCELA:

This morning we heard from our K-12 system, and we talked about reopening in the fall and about PPE, sanitation equipment and the need to ensure our schools open up safely. Within NSHE, could you all talk about any potential costs that will come from the need for PPE, the need for extra sanitation equipment and whether those are accounted for in the proposed budget?

DR. MEANA:

I do not have specific figures for you at the moment. Exactly what we have spent already on PPE and plexiglass and all of the sanitation protocols we will have to and have already started to implement. We are collecting all of these expenses to investigate their eligibility for FEMA grants. Our expenses, in that regard, are significant.

DR. JOHNSON:

The expenses are significant to the tune of about \$32 million so far in a range of items including lost revenues from events we had to cancel, dormitory rents and food service rents we had to reimburse back to the students when they left in the middle of the term. We have been keeping the hand sanitizer and other sanitation-equipment industry running smoothly these last few months. We have collected face masks for students who come to class and forgot theirs. We have hand-sanitizing equipment and desk-sanitizing equipment for every classroom and every office. We have bought cameras for our SMART classrooms so we can do Zoom at the same time we do in-class presentations. We spent quite a bit on that as well. There have been significant expenses of new expenditures as well as forgone revenue.

JOYCE HELENS, PH.D. (President, Great Basin College):

The smaller institutions in rural Nevada have been hit hard and stretched thin because of these expenses and costs. Great Basin College has spent around \$250,000. We have been fortunate that our local businesses have assisted us with things like 800 masks, for example. We are staying strict with our protocols so that we will keep staff and students safe.

FEDERICO ZARAGOZA, PH.D. (President, College of Southern Nevada):

We mirror some of the comments that have been made already. We have been converting our labs into COVID-compliant environments, and that has included insertion of plexiglass. We have created spacing requirements and equipped our labs with the appropriate PPE for all three campuses. It has been a substantial investment north of \$300,000.

VINCE SOLIS, PH.D. (President, Western Nevada College):

Similar to the other institutions, in the initial response, we have spent right at \$100,000 in PPE equipment along with an additional \$600,000 plus after that in all of the other areas related to what the campuses are doing in response to keeping the campus safe. We are still working on collecting data for what it is going to cost us on lost revenue in some of our areas.

KARIN HILGERSOM, PH.D. (President, Truckee Meadows Community College):

We have spent approximately \$350,000 on COVID mitigation. We continue to purchase items so that we will be ready for reopening in the fall.

KUMUD ACHARYA, PH.D. (President, Desert Research Institute):

Our expenses are similar to other smaller institutions in preparing our campus for safely allowing people to come to work with hand sanitizers and PPE and all of that.

One thing I would like you to know is that the Desert Research Institute did not receive any CARES Act dollars so our impact is pretty significant.

VICKIE SHIELDS, PH.D. (Executive Vice President, Nevada State College):

I echo what many of our colleagues have said. We have spent about \$300,000 in PPE, plexiglass, sanitizers and making sure that masks are ready when we need them and when students forget theirs. It is quite an undertaking, but it is all worth it.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

Chancellor Reilly, Mr. Clinger and Presidents, it is good to see all of you. Chancellor, you had indicated that the Board of Regents in June approved the transfer of \$50 million from the Market Fluctuation Account, but you are only using \$35 million of it. Is that correct?

CHANCELLOR REILLY:

That is correct. The way the distribution account works is that it is based upon how much you put in so that distribution varies per institution. Some institutions received a bit more than needed. The loss of revenue for institutions like UNR, UNLV, DRI and maybe a small amount for TMCC exceeded the additional 5 percent of that \$35 million we needed. Those dollars went toward mitigating some of those losses, for example, at the dorms, the loss of athletic revenue, et cetera. I hope that answered your question, yes, it was. Some institutions, it covered more than their 5 percent that they put in to reach the \$35 million, and those dollars were used to mitigate some of the losses they had been accumulating.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

So, there was an additional \$15 million that was distributed to institutions that is not being used to balance the budget. Is that what I am hearing?

CHANCELLOR REILLY:

Yes, that is correct. Those dollars are being used to cover some of the losses that the institutions have.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

I am looking at a spreadsheet that was presented to the Board of Regents. I have not had a chance to go back and look at the details of it. Is that going to tell me where the dollars were distributed? It is color-coded.

CHANCELLOR REILLY:

Yes, it should have the distribution that each of the institutions received based upon their contribution, of course. I do not have that right in front of me but those institutions, UNR, UNLV, DRI and TMCC, had an excess amount of the 5 percent. Mr. Clinger, could you verify that for me?

MR. CLINGER:

The Chancellor is correct. I have the color-coded spreadsheet in front of me. It was \$14.8 million above and beyond what was needed for the budget reduction. The additional \$12.3 million went to UNLV; \$441,000 went to UNR; DRI was \$1.5 million, and TMCC was

\$225 million. Maybe I can give just a little bit of background on how the amount for each institution is determined. It is based on their average daily balance in our operating pool. We do monthly distributions of investment earnings in the System on the pool, based on those balances. When we initially calculated those distributions, the System Administration Office had excess funds. We took those funds and distributed them to the community colleges to ensure the community colleges were held whole.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

The largest distribution of that excess \$14.8 million were to both of the medical schools at the universities. Were there deficits in these budget accounts that needed to be made up? Is that the need for it?

MR. CLINGER:

We made the decision to use the Market Fluctuation Account to cover the additional 5 percent in budget reductions that were requested by the Governor's Office. We had the Market Fluctuation Account with \$50 million in it. Based on the way the allocations worked out, we were able to cover every institution because we had those excess dollars in System Administration and was able to repurpose those to the community colleges. Since the distributions are made on those balances, institutions like the Universities, DRI and TMCC received excess based on the distribution methodology. That is how those dollars are spent in the institutions.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

Could an alternative choice have been made to offset the \$10-million increase in student fees?

MR. CLINGER:

We could have made that choice, but then we would have been required to cut additional spending from each of the institutions, if I understand your question correctly.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

The Chancellor had indicated that for Fiscal Year 2021, the value of furloughs for your professional staff was \$21.2 million. Did I hear that correctly?

CHANCELLOR REILLY:

Yes, that is correct.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

Over how many positions is that allocated?

CHANCELLOR REILLY:

Mr. Clinger, do you have that number of positions? This is just professional staff, not our classified staff.

MR. CLINGER:

I do not have the full time equivalent (FTE) count, but the calculation was based on all of the positions that are included in the State operating budget. We also have positions that are self-supporting accounts, and that calculation does not include those positions. It was only those in the State-reported operating budget. We can certainly get the FTE count.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

Will positions in non-State-supported operating budgets also be taking a furlough?

CHANCELLOR REILLY:

We will be taking the final policy to the Board after the Legislature convenes at our July 23rd meeting. The way we are looking at it right now is that, for example our grant fund, if it is a position 70-percent funded grant or more, we are exempting those because they are bringing in dollars. We are looking at exempting clinical revenue-type spots. Positions that are doing clinical revenue, because we need the revenue at our medical schools and dental schools, we would exempt those. We have certain categories of exemptions that would include positions that are grant-funded or revenue-generating that do not make sense to cut because we would be losing out on revenue.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

Do you happen to have the value of the furloughs for your classified staff?

MR. CLINGER:

I calculated for the classified staff in the State-operating budget at \$4.5 million, and that would have been for 12 furlough days.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

I would like to hear from each one of the Presidents about what this reduction is doing for your students that are currently students and how it is going to affect your future students that are coming to your institution next year.

DR. JOHNSON:

We are making an effort to keep every class staffed with an instructor. Due to the many positions that will not be rehired, there will be many vacancies. We will be teaching a number of classes with a letter of appointment or part-time faculty rather than having the regular tenure-track faculty in the classroom with them. We still will get all of the class taught.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

President Johnson, when you say that, are you saying to me that your classes are going to be online, or will some of it be a mix?

DR. JOHNSON:

It will be a mix. That is mainly due to the Governor's directive on social spacing. With six feet of spacing, we cannot have students in our large classrooms sitting next to each other. In our smaller classes we plan to have in person, like small discussion sections and laboratory sections. Medium-size classes who are planning to do a mix where part of the class will be in the classroom and part of the class at home using Zoom simultaneously. The very large classes will be completely remotely delivered. The degree of social distancing is determining the mode of instruction for each of our classes depending on class size.

DR. MEANA:

My answer is similar to Dr. Johnson's. We will depend more on part-time instructors and letters of appointment given the hiring freeze. The students will be impacted in many ways. Budget cuts always impact students over and above the surcharge because we are not able to completely provide them with the experience and support that we can when we are not working under these conditions.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

An additional question to you, Dr. Johnson, because Chancellor Reilly and I had this conversation, for both you and UNR with your dorms, will our kids be able to access those, especially our students who could be homeless or foster students, will they still be able to access the dorms?

DR. JOHNSON:

Yes, we actually kept 91 students in the dormitories who just had nowhere to go including our foster students and the like, during the spring of 2020. We sent most of the students home at spring break and asked them not to return. We will provide housing options to those who are homeless, whose families do not accept them anymore and our foster youth. We had Dr. Cheryl Hug-English, who is the Director of student-health services, walk with our housing director through the dormitories. We learned it will be safe to have two people to a room but not more dense than that. We will only be able to house two-thirds of our capacity due to those space limitations, but we will have housing options for the special groups that you mentioned.

CHANCELLOR REILLY:

We departed from many of our colleagues' institutions nationally and made a decision early on that those students who did not have a place to go, homeless, foster care, international students, we saw as essential and kept those. As President Johnson has said, less than 5 percent of the dorm population at UNR and upward to 10 percent of the dorm population at UNLV were on our

campuses through the spring semester. That has given us a lot of experience in how to manage that population for the fall reopening at a lesser capacity. I wanted to note that unlike other institutions that told all the students to go home whether they had homes or not, we made the decision to keep them on, and our institutions did so.

DR. ZARAGOZA:

At CSN, the primary impact has been on the instructional side. Much like our sister institutions, we have adopted a robust and diverse instruction-delivery system. Fifty-five percent of our courses are delivered through a hybrid mechanism. Within that, 30 percent of those are current technology programs and lab-intensive programs, and in those programs, we will be losing about 30 percent capacity. We are looking at scheduling and creative ways to make these programs an accessible source for our students. The remaining 45 percent will be online. Traditionally, we average about 30 percent online. This potential increase is consistent with a mix of a program we have had in the past. One area the budget reduction impacts us is in our student-support system. Our aspirational goal was to reach 350-to-1 advisors to students. Given the budget reductions, we might have to delay that aspiration until additional funds are made available.

DR. SOLIS:

On our end, similar to our sister institutions, the disruption has been in areas like scheduling of classrooms. For example, our biggest classroom holds 140 seats, and we are down to 25 capacity in that classroom. We used similar modeling throughout the campus.

We are looking at a 60/40 split for the fall semester in terms of 60 percent of our classes going remote and online, while 40 percent, particularly in our career-technical education that require the lab component to be on site. We are working closely with our faculty to ensure that all safety protocols are in place to provide that student with hands-on experience. Similar to what other colleagues have said, the biggest impact has been to the student experience, as a whole. Technology allows for the exchange of information but is no substitute for that human interaction students thrive and grow on.

DR. SHIELDS:

We are going with a combination like the rest of our colleagues, part hybrid and part online. We have increased our online to about 60 percent. We were about 25 percent online before this. We pride ourselves on being a small class, face-to-face experience, so that is definitely a challenge for students who will not get that experience. We are trying to enhance that virtually every way we can. Lab classes will be in person. We have to have many more of them to account for social distance. We are committed to provide the same robust courses for students to take. The nursing clinicals are in person, but the theory or lecture parts of those classes are online making them hybrid.

DR. HILGERSOM:

When I think about the planning that has occurred this summer, there is a context we have to consider. As a community college, we serve many first-generation diverse student populations. They, themselves, as well as their families, have been disproportionately impacted by this tragic pandemic. Our faculty and staff are also in a pickle once in a while because they have school-aged children and are trying to figure out how to teach with a level of excellence from their busy households.

With that said, I am proud of TMCC. We provided amazing training this summer so that our faculty will not only be teaching online in the fall but also will be highly skilled at teaching online.

We will continue with our face-to-face CTE courses, our health careers and labs, all of which will all occur from a socially distant format. We are doing our best to maintain a high level of excellence that Nevada can continue to be proud of in this disturbing, terrible situation.

DR. HELENS:

We are in a slightly different situation than our sister institutions. Since we have been online serving 84,000 square miles of rural and frontier Nevada, we are going to 72-percent online in the fall. What I would say has suffered because of the circumstances is the investing in technology and services to students. We have to keep up with technology to be able to serve our vast geography. Even things like old phone systems and technical labs will suffer. We have focused on

what needs to be hands-on, which are all of our technical programs. We are still building new ones in Nevada. Also, our health occupations, turning out more nurses and first responders. We have strict protocols at distancing, masks, and we successfully finished our CTE technical programs in May. We are focusing on that to make sure we are still serving everyone. We will be increasing approximately 72 percent online in the fall.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

Will there be any increase fees for that online technology, or how will that work with students paying for their courses?

CHANCELLOR REILLY:

Going back to your questions of the reopening and impact, at our July 23rd meeting, each of the institutions will be presenting their reopening plans to the Board. We can make them available to you and the Senate as a whole. We are not looking at any increased fees for the students. We are asking our students, staff, faculty and parents to be flexible. We do not know what it will look like in mid-August. We know we have successfully pivoted before. We know we can do this. We know our students want in-person teaching, particularly for math and science classes. We are going to pivot. We will offer that education remotely or in person or as we are planning hybrid. There will not be any differential in the fees there.

SENATOR DONDERO LOOP:

As a Nevadan, I appreciate that you are taking students from all over the world and all over the Country and still allowing them to have an education in Nevada at our institutions.

SENATOR WOODHOUSE:

Thank you to Chancellor Reilly and all of the Presidents who are here this afternoon. We appreciate the time you are giving to us. I have a very specific question, and this one will be for Dr. Meana. One of the programs to address is Nevada's need to increase our teacher pipeline, which led us to appropriate funds for the Nevada Institute on Teaching and Educator Preparation which we affectionately call NITEP. That was back in 2017, we increased funds for it in 2019. Those funds do reside at NDE, and the program is under way at UNLV College of Education. When we went over the NDE budget, one of the cuts is this program.

Dr. Meana, when working with your Dean at the College of Education there on the UNLV campus, what have you seen because of that \$750,000 cut for the NITEP students that are involved in the program?

DR. MEANA:

It is heartbreaking when we are cutting a program that seeks to enhance the experience of our students in the public school system. We try to instill that kind of innovative teaching pedagogy into the regular curriculum, it is a loss for us to not be able to focus with that cohort on innovation in the classroom.

SENATOR WOODHOUSE:

Dr. Meana, because those students are in cohorts, and I believe you are on your second or third cohort, where do these students go now? Will they matriculate into the regular College of Education program, or is there a way you are going to try an alternative method for them to continue in this kind of a program?

DR. MEANA:

I will have to consult more closely with Dean Metcalf about this, but I can assure you that we will do everything we can to provide as much continuity so they can matriculate.

SENATOR HARRIS:

To each President who wishes to respond, what deductions to your institution is the most devastating from your perspective and why?

DR. MEANA:

The most devastating deductions in terms of students' success is anything that does not allow us to provide the kind of support we need to provide to close the achievement gap. That is the

heart of why we are all here and do what we do. We had plans to expand our support services to target that achievement gap directly. Those have to be curtailed because of the situation.

We fully appreciate that we are in an unprecedented financial crisis that does require some incredibly difficult decisions on your part. We are broken about the State's allocation for the engineering building. As you know, that allocation of \$20 million, we went ahead and bonded our matching \$20 million. It is a double penalty as we are now saddled with the debt service for a bond that we would have never taken out had the State not generously allocated this money to us. We hope this project is going to be a high priority for reinstatement when State finances allow. That is another one that is difficult.

DR. ZARAGOZA:

The most trenchant cut for us at CSN is we are freezing 30 positions which will impact our ability to provide the environment we are aspiring for. We are not laying anybody off. These are positions that are being frozen up this next fiscal year.

DR. JOHNSON:

I would echo Dr. Zaragoza's concern. By freezing several positions, we are postponing for a year or two the ability to hire tenure-track staff who are responsible for classroom teaching, scholarships, doing research and bringing grants into the University and the State. These are the individuals who are at the frontline of their knowledge base. We have to replace them with part-time instructors who may have industry experience, but we are losing out on the depth of the education that comes with people who are truly involved in the current level of their science and are devoted to the students on campus.

DR. SOLIS:

It is similar on our end. We have positions that have been frozen, 14 nonteaching positions and 7 teaching positions. For a campus our size, it is a tremendous amount of people who we do not have in place to help our students.

Additionally, our campus is going through a dynamic change in our student demographics with 30 percent of our students now being minority students. Not having the access and that personal one-on-one time with students in a live setting has become detrimental. We found out the digital divide is real. Students from rural Nevada and those who come from our minority groups were having real issues in terms with connecting them. We are doing our part to get computers and equipment, but there are issues on their end in terms of access. Those are the things that have impacted Western Nevada College moving forward.

DR. HELENS:

Our focus is on workforce development and preparing people to work in rural and frontier Nevada. We were prepared for construction on a welding lab that will now be put on hold, which we have been requesting since 2009. It has been difficult because we cannot do fabrication and prepare students for advanced welding. We were getting prepared to build the Health Sciences Building in Winnemucca for more nurses and first responders as well as upgrade the campus in Pahrump. Technical upgrades has hit us on all fronts. We have not laid off any staff, and our faculty is working and doubling down. Even though we were shut down, we just graduated, early, a nursing class, and they all passed their NCLEX exams at 100 percent. We know how important it is to provide that kind of workforce development in rural Nevada.

SENATOR HARRIS:

Thank you for your honest assessment of what is in front of us.

CHANCELLOR REILLY:

Overall as a System, the Board took strategic and ambitious goals around increasing graduation, what we are all about, and closing the achievement gap of many of our students. This led to the high-touch programs. The Board set ambitious goals around advisors and to set a ratio that all of the institutes would implement. Moving forward, not hiring some of this staff will have an impact.

SENATOR PICKARD:

I was intrigued to hear that the medical school took out a payroll-protection-program loan and was surprised they would qualify. Have other institutions or schools within the institution looked at these, particularly the clinical programs you discussed?

CHANCELLOR REILLY:

To my knowledge, and maybe some of the other presidents, many of our institutions are applying for different kinds of financial assistance. The protection loan, however, the only institution that did apply and qualify for it was the medical school at UNLV.

DR. MEANA:

If I may clarify, it is the faculty practice plan at UNLV. It is the clinical arm, the part that is providing clinical services, where the salaries are incredibly dependent on clinical revenue. This, as I said, had a precipitous drop due to COVID. The clinical arm was the part of the medical school that applied for that loan and got it.

SENATOR PICKARD:

That makes sense, particularly if, technically, they are a separate entity. From a legal standpoint, a stand-alone entity, they would possibly qualify as a small business to obtain it. My guess is there are other components of each institution that might be able to do the same thing. That is an interesting and creative way of meeting a need.

My second question, Chancellor, has to do with the University's commitments to the individual schools within each institution. The one thing we do not see, and I know from prior discussions, is each institution makes commitments to the individual schools, School of Medicine, Law School, whatever it may be. Are those commitments still in place, or will you also be moving those dollars around?

CHANCELLOR REILLY:

Mr. Clinger or a president may want to jump in, but I believe they are pretty much in place. We took across-the-board cuts in order to meet those. That means every one of the institutions and schools were a part of those cuts. We did not make any surgical or strategic decisions to cut one program or another.

MR. CLINGER:

Each of the appropriations in this case is what we call them. It would be the Law School, the Medical School, each taking a 16-percent reduction in their State fund. In some cases, that is offset with a Market Fluctuation Account. The main teaching account is also offset with student surcharge.

SENATOR PICKARD:

I am looking at the total budget reductions on the far right. Is that in addition to the 16-percent reductions in those commitments, or are they included in these numbers?

MR. CLINGER:

If you are looking at the summary sheet we provided, and those numbers on the far right that say total budget reductions, they represent the 16-percent reduction in each one of those accounts.

SENATOR SETTELMAYER:

With the changed educational environment and everything going virtual, have any of you had the opportunity to poll your students and find out how many of them wish to return? Are you seeing a large influx of people due to the change in the economy who want to use this opportunity to further their education? Have you looked at your return rates? Those were general questions to all of you.

DR. MEANA:

The enrollment at UNLV is flat so we have not lost any students if we compare it to last year, which is incredible. If you look at the enrollment this year across the Country, they do not look that good. The interesting thing is, if you break it down, we do have a slight decrease in first-year freshman coming in. Our retention rate, meaning the extent we kept the first years going into

second year, has actually gone up 2-percentage points. In terms of surveying the students, we kind of do not have to. They have let us know that although they appreciate our efforts in remote instructions, certainly at UNLV, we have heard loud and clear how much they would love to be back in person.

DR. SOLIS:

We did survey students as we went into the latter part of the spring semester to get some feedback from them in terms of their experience. Similar to what my colleagues have said earlier, they would much prefer the in-person experience. This is something we are monitoring closely. The numbers are down 12 percent for the fall semester. By category, we are up in the first-time student in terms of those that are participating through our high school programs in our dual or concurrent enrollment programs. The category we are seeing that is down significantly is our male students. We have some meetings coming up to try to address that. We are preparing to address what we perceive to be an increase demand in our homeschool market for the fall semester.

DR. HELENS:

We are in a slightly different situation from our colleagues having been online and are trusted to be presenting excellence through online instruction. In the summer, we were up. We are up now about 25 percent in FTE and are equal to our large increase last fall. Currently, as of today, we have kept the students we have had. We surveyed our students and have ninetieth percentile of satisfaction with online education.

DR. SHIELDS:

We have surveyed our students several times as things have progressed, and they prefer to be on campus with in-person instruction. Most of them had a good experience in the spring and have been flexible and adaptable. Our summer enrollments were up 2.5 percent, and we are slightly up for new freshman in the fall. We could end up, when all numbers were in, as flat, but we believe we are slightly up from last year's enrollment. The students are hanging with us and are flexible. There was not a large amount of withdrawals nor did we receive massive amounts of student complaints. I consider that a good barometer. We are doing the best we can, and the students appreciate that.

DR. HILGERSOM:

I would echo what my colleague said. Overall, things went fairly well. We surveyed the students on a number of topics. Our summer enrollments have been up quite a bit, approximately 8 to 10 percent depending on the snapshot. Fall looks to be slightly down. We are seeing lower numbers of male students, and we are trying to analyze that. Our web-based enrollments are up 82 percent. The students are realizing that COVID is not going away in the fall term as much as we would like. They are ready to stay motivated and stay in school. Not being able to recruit in person at high schools this spring presents challenges for our new students. We are a bit down in new students, but we are seeing robust numbers of returning students enrolled for fall.

DR. ZARAGOZA:

We are experiencing the same trend as our sister institutions. We surveyed our students as well, and the feedback we received is what we anticipated. Many of our students prefer interacting models, and there is a higher demand now for hybrid-related courses. We have not seen any drop in terms of summer-to-spring projections. We are projecting this fall that we will be up in applications, and our FTE is up. We are projecting to see an uptick in enrollment for the fall.

DR. JOHNSON:

We were up this summer and will be a little down in the fall. We have surveyed students, and it is very clear that both students and parents are interested in in-person instruction to the degree we can do it in a safe manner.

SENATOR SPEARMAN:

I want to start off with the survey you did. Did you do that by age group? Any other demographic breakout of adults who were saying they would rather have in-person classes, hybrid or those who said they like online?

DR. SHIELDS:

We broke it out by all of our demographics, by racial demographics, by school, by the level of education they had attained. There were some differences amongst the schools of those that are most used to online instruction, our school of education has been more an online instruction for a long time where our nursing students were probably the most reluctant to like the completely online. We saw the most variation by our three schools.

DR. SOLIS:

We had students who did not mind the transition. Those students were comfortable taking online or remote courses. About 30 percent of our students were doing that already. The students that were hesitant and loud in terms of their responses to not enjoying the experience of remote learning were students in the career technical education programs. Our nursing and EMT programs continued running. They followed all of the protocols. They split out the courses with no more than eight people in the courses and the labs. Those students need that hands-on experience to get the full educational spectrum of what needs to happen in those programs.

SENATOR SPEARMAN:

If you start off the school year and knowing you will have operational expenses that include the brick and mortar, have you noticed any cost savings from going online? If so, have you thought about how you might reinvest that savings or use those funds to make up shortfalls in other ways?

CHANCELLOR REILLY:

The initial cost is an additional cost to retrofitting rooms for SMART learning and increase technology. We had to bring much of our faculty up to speed. Some were proficient in online instruction, and others needed better technology around it. The initial cost has been more of an increase in cost to get up to speed. In some respects, we were working to expand our online and remote experience to help both with accessing and student success. In order to implement technology in a short period of time into the classrooms, it has been an increased cost. Maybe one of the other presidents might want to address it.

DR. MEANA:

That is an interesting question because even in moments of crisis, we find opportunity. Not so much with the instruction but we have discovered we have employees who can effectively work remote. As we have difficulty in terms of getting the funds for buildings and for the brick and mortar that you speak of, we may be able to reconfigure how many people have to be on site and how many employees can do their work remotely. That may free up some of that space we are always so desperately after.

SENATOR SPEARMAN:

That is what I was speaking about. There has to be some cost savings with respect to utilities, maintenance and that sort of thing. Down the road, even if there was an initial train-up cost, et cetera, there might be some cost savings there.

You spoke about hiring contract or part-time faculty members. When I taught at the University of Louisville, we were called "adjunct," and we did not have the same benefits as tenure-track professors. Here is the question: as we move through this dual pandemic, have you thought about any ways in which adjunct faculty, which would be the ones to carry you over the hump, have opportunities to go into tenure track at some point? That is the most secure track for anyone who is in the academy.

CHANCELLOR REILLY:

You are absolutely right. When we looked at implementing the hiring freeze, we had to meet the demand for instruction. As everyone has heard, many of our institutions have had increase during the summer, and we are flat in many places during the fall. We had to balance between keeping faculty positions vacant and ensuring that we are hiring more graduate students and adjunct faculty who do not have those benefits. Although teaching experience is important when they make decisions on tenure, it can be more challenging as far as who is competitive particularly if you are looking at the need for research. Perhaps, the community colleges have a better pathway

of moving into that track. I would say at the universities, probably not as much. Let the presidents jump in on that since they would have more direct experience.

DR. MEANA:

The Chancellor is right that the tenure track is dependent on scholarships and research. It is a complicated pathway. However, there are other pathways to convert people who are doing part-time teaching into these faculty and residents. For example, at UNLV, which is a full-time teaching position, those may not be tenured, but they tend to be secure. It is a slightly different category, the teaching fact.

DR. JOHNSON:

We open up all of our positions nationwide. A qualified individual who is adjunct and wants to move into this as a full-time career is welcome to apply. We actually give some of these instructors an opportunity to step up and become fulltime. They can take a lectureship or an instructor position, which is a non-tenure track. They can accumulate several classes they could teach, and if they are really good at it, they could apply for those instructor and lecturer's positions.

DR. ZARAGOZA:

Community colleges, in general, have a robust pathway from the adjunct faculty into the tenure-track lead pathways. However, there are considerations that oftentimes relate to accreditation, other than the program bases might alter, even the ratio between full-time and part-time faculty. We are trying to develop these pathways by building our adjunct faculty so they can transition into faculty positions full time.

SENATOR SPEARMAN:

Here is why I asked that question. I could be mistaken, but research shows that many people who are adjunct are also people from communities of color or other marginalized positions. On the other side of this, if there is not a clear path, maybe looking at the tenure process and how to be invited and apply is something we should do right now. If these are the same people that help you get over the hump, it would be great if they had something to look forward to in terms of tenure opportunity with benefits and retirement. We know that most woman retire in poverty, and many universities have faculty predominately made of women. How can we ensure that those people who helped you through this crisis do not fall victim to poverty in their later years? We do not know how long we will be in this environment or know how long the recovery will be after we come out.

CHANCELLOR REILLY:

You bring up a very good point. We need to look at that area and those opportunities. Well-stated, yes. That pathway is more pronounced and set at our community colleges where that pathway is clearly moving forward. It is more challenging because of the research component at the universities. Your point is well-taken, and we should be looking at that.

SENATOR SPEARMAN:

I might offer this as a suggestion: ask those who will be in those positions if they will collaborate with you for the process so, on the other side, everyone understands what you are doing.

The other thing I want to talk about is research. There is a thing in the academy, publish or perish. In the dynamic environment that we are in right now, one of the pandemics we talk about a lot, the other we do not talk about not so much. We talk about COVID-19, and we do not talk about the pandemic structural racism. This area right now, many research opportunities exist. Are you encouraging your faculty to go after some of those research grants? I see it much like a few four or five years ago, there were many research grants going out for renewable and clean energy. In 2018, I spoke at MIT on that very subject. A number of people there were doing research on that. Have you looked at some of the contemporary headlines and thought about it from the standpoint of getting research dollars to answer the cosmic questions we have for our culture today?

DR. MEANA:

We met with our black faculty and staff and formed an antiracism task force. We convened about a month ago and have been putting together a list of recommendations for leadership to commit to. One of those recommendations, which we have publicly committed to, is when we are out of the hiring freeze, to do hiring of scholars that focus on these issues that are obviously so troubling for the Nation, and we understand so badly. We have made a commitment to do that as soon as we are able.

DR. JOHNSON:

We have been working with both faculty and students on studies in African-American diaspora, the migration and culture of African Americans throughout history in the Country and to present day. We have a program in gender, race and identity, as well as the department of anthropology working on these particular kinds of scholarly issues.

From the president's chair, we do not run research programs or write the grants. We have been successful, in the last few years, in ethnically diversifying our faculty. That shows an interest then in the types of grants these faculty seek. This includes journalism, anthropology and gender race identity.

SENATOR SPEARMAN:

This is what I mean when I am talking about going after research dollars, not necessarily that the universities would do that. There may be other entities, other corporations, other philanthropical organizations that, at this point in time, are trying to figure this out as well. When I think of research dollars, here is something I pulled up in a review in *Public Health* and the connection between racism and health outcomes. There may be a philanthropical organization that is willing to pay a professor, a department, a collaboration, an interdisciplinary collaboration, something on that order, to help them understand how to move through structural racism, the issues structural racism has caused, not just on the health side but also when we start talking about community policing, et cetera. There are dollars out there if you want to look and see what is there and how you might encourage your faculty to go after something like that. This is something that not only would bring you an influx of money but also would add to the body of knowledge. Most researchers are trying to add to the body of knowledge that is already out there. Until we can talk about structural racism, we are 50 years behind. Whatever they do now will get us to at least another 25 more years.

The last thing I want to talk about are the faculty members who are not completely comfortable with the hybrid. There will be some who are comfortable with the hybrid. Have you looked at ways to bring your core, seasoned faculty members along as you move to this hybrid environment? Is there a way you might be able to work with DOE? I am sure there are K-12 teachers who are experiencing the same thing. Perhaps, working together in a type of partnership will enable us to help each other move through this tenuous environment.

DR. JOHNSON:

Thank you for that idea as well as the question. Recognizing we are going to have to do more remote and hybrid-type instruction, we have set up some brand new trainings for this summer. Even though most of our faculty are off contract, we have provided some small stipends. We have over 300 faculty members going through these short courses this summer focusing on how to transform themselves from lecturers into users of hybrid technology. There has been a good uptake on the part of the faculty to seek better ways to deliver instruction with these hybrid technologies.

DR. MEANA:

Similarly to UNR, we have also been providing trainings over the summer to our faculty with the small stipend to hone their skills. We are starting to add another component as we go into the fall. It is like a buddy system where we pair a faculty member who is adept at technology with another faculty member who is not as conversant in it so the more advanced person can help the faculty member who is not quite there yet.

DR. ZARAGOZA:

College of Southern Nevada is also following that trend, and we are encouraged by all of our faculties actually interested in our in-service over the summer, even faculty who is not on contract.

We are pleased by that. We are building a coaching element to make sure that when they come back to campus, we have support systems for them as well.

DR. SHIELDS:

We have expanded our center for teaching and learning excellence trainings this summer to teach hybrid and enhanced online. We have invested in AQ online training for 30 of our faculty members throughout the year. They work on the class they are teaching and get national-quality-level help and instruction and mentorship to do that. The third prong is the exact one you suggested, Senator. We are trying to pull in our most seasoned, online instructors to be mentors and buddies, as Dr. Meana said, with our other instructors. There has been a great enthusiasm from our faculty. All of the trainings are full, and now the 30 seats for the AQ just filled today. We are encouraged by that.

SENATOR SPEARMAN:

Thank you, all, for the work that you do. My questions were more designed to kind of jumpstart the conversation about how can we use whatever savings we have and how can we use this ghastly crisis as an opportunity to think about education and academia in a different paradigm other than the one that is 1,000 years old, that most of us are still using today. I want to end by saying that all of the numbers that we have listened to, we have heard, and they are online and on paper, represent people and people's lives. I asked about the adjunct faculty because they will not have health benefits. That means they will more than likely be part of our Medicaid roles. As tragic as it is, this is where we find ourselves. I want to make sure we are all focusing on the fact that we are talking about people.

SENATOR WASHINGTON:

This question is simple, and you can address the question if it applies to you. Are any of you anticipating extra revenues with your athletic programs, especially UNLV? I know they will be using the Allegiant Stadium for their football games. Most of these major colleges are carried by their athletic programs. Will you be acquiring any extra revenue from that?

DR. MEANA:

No, is the short answer. We are worried because athletics is going to take a big hit. At the moment, we are on pins and needles waiting to see what the guidance is from the conference and NCAA. We do not know to what extent we are going to be able to have a normal athletic season, a normal football season and whether spectators are even going to be permitted if we do have games. We are potentially looking at quite devastating losses in athletics, unfortunately.

DR. JOHNSON:

We are looking at devastating losses if we do not have a season, if we can only fill the stadium a third full, if we have sports. It is all looking like losses this year. To your original premise, neither UNLV nor UNR make a lot of money on sports. We actually lose money. It is an expense to run a sports program, but it is an important program to attract student athletes who are also, we emphasize, the student part of student athletes. It is a good program and good entertainment for the community. Those are all expensive programs, and neither UNLV nor UNR make money on the operation.

SENATOR OHRENSCHALL:

How will these cuts affect students in their degree programs? Will these cuts mean that if a required course is not available for a year or longer, could students, either undergrad or in the graduate programs, have a substitute class and still be able to graduate? My worry is if a student pursuing a degree needs a cultural anthropology class to graduate but it is not offered for another year, maybe they will just give up and quit school and not finish their degree. I hate to see that happen if these cuts come to pass. Could anyone speak to that?

DR. JOHNSON:

We will see to it that our students get graduated. Even back when we were closing programs during the recession, we saw to it that everyone was able to graduate in their major. We will offer the classes and counsel with students to ensure they graduate on time.

DR. MEANA:

We have paid close attention to the sequencing of courses to ensure we are not making any cuts that interfere with the progression of students through the program. That is key.

DR. SOLIS:

Similar to my colleagues, our priority is graduation and completion. All of our strategies are used in terms of scheduling, use of our adjunct, independent studies and any strategy we could use to ensure student completions and success rates are not impacted through this pandemic process.

DR. ZARAGOZA:

At CSN, we had about 2,000 students in the spring semester who were technology-education students that had lab requirements. Obviously, they could not complete their programs and took incompletes in the spring. We were able to re-engage them in the summer to enable them to complete their program of studies. Currently, technology-education programs, not only in Nevada but also nationwide, are grappling with how to deal with the hands-on, intense lab requirements that may not be possible in the COVID environment.

DR. SHIELDS:

Our number one commitment is getting students graduated and working on those pathways. Tests make it more difficult, but that will always be our commitment. Other things may have to suffer. If they do, it will not be getting students towards graduation. This is what we are all here for and what we are all about.

SENATOR OHRENSCHALL:

I am not sure how the lab requirements will be dealt with.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

I quickly want to go back, unfortunately, to the Market Fluctuation Account. My understanding is that there are allocations made from this account on an occasional or a regular basis to the institutions, which they use to backfill their operating funds. How big of a hit will that be on an ongoing basis as we take the corpus out of this account? Are you prepared for that? Could you give a little bit of history on this account, because it is a big part of your solution?

MR. CLINGER:

I will talk about the operating pool. The operating pool has over 23,000 different accounts that are scattered throughout the System at every institution. We pool all of the funds from those accounts, and we invest those. We invest them in equities, in bonds and a good portion of that is kept in cash for day-to-day operations. The earnings on all of those funds that are pooled are distributed back to the campuses. Currently, that distribution rate is 2.75 percent of those earnings back to the campuses every month. If the market performs better than that 2.75, then those funds build up over time. Historically, what has happened is when those funds build up, the Board has done special allocations from that pool to fund things like deferred maintenance, special projects and that sort of thing.

The Market Fluctuation Account was created at a Board meeting in 2010 to try and ensure that when you have market decline, that those monthly distributions to the campuses continue. The way that the Market Fluctuation Account was funded is similar to the way we do special distributions. In March of 2012, the Board took those excess funds, above the distributions to the campuses, and put it into the Market Fluctuation Account, again, at a Board of Regents meeting. In March of 2013, they did another allocation.

To the last part of your question, what is the impact of that? The impact is if we see market downturns like we saw in February and March, we no longer have that \$50-million backstop to continue those monthly distributions to the campuses. If we see a repeat of February or March in the stock market, those monthly distributions to the campuses will cease. We will not have enough funds to distribute those earnings to each campus.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

On a scope basis, how big are those distributions, combined?

MR. CLINGER:

Those distributions for the campuses range in total for the whole System between \$1.5 and \$1.8 million. They are based on each institutions average balance for the month. This is why they vary. If one month a campus has a higher balance and you use the 2.75-percent rate, it can go up to as much as \$1.8, and then other months it could go down to \$1.5 million.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

We heard from Mr. Ward Patrick from State Public Safety Works, last night, about the cancellation of the UNLV Engineering Building is obviously a piece of the budget solution the Governor offered us to consider. I know the System has issued bonds for UNLV's portion of that building. What are your current plans on dealing with those bonds? Are you going to refund them or reallocate them to other projects? Can you give us an update on that?

DR. MEANA:

We are in the process of brainstorming what to do in this situation. I do not have a final answer for you. I am not a proponent of deactivating them. You are really throwing away that \$3-million cost. We are strategizing how to best use these funds. We are looking at a debt service on it of over \$1 million a year that we have already paid half of one year a couple of weeks ago. We will not dissolve them, but we have not reached a firm conclusion about what the next step should be.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

Could you repeat one more time what the debt service level is on that?

DR. MEANA:

We will be paying \$1,020,000 for that debt service for 20 years. Those payments started this month, and we paid a half year. We also raised \$8.1 million in donor pledges toward this building. So, we are sad.

SENATOR WOODHOUSE:

This is more of a comment, but at the end of my comment if Chancellor Reilly and Dr. Meana would like to respond, I would appreciate that. This is quite apropos after the last question that was asked. Last night, we heard the presentation on the State's capital-improvement projects. Due to the circumstances, we are presently in, the funding to continue the UNLV Engineering Building project is being cut. I wanted to put on the record some important pieces of information that we should all be aware of. This building is a critical project for meeting the skyrocketing demand in engineering education in southern Nevada, and it allows a diverse group of local, first-time college students to continue their STEM studies.

Some of the points we should be aware of regarding the student population that could be coming to the new UNLV Engineering Building and all of the opportunities there: 86.8 percent of those students are from Clark County; 69.4 percent are minorities; 45.1 percent are first-generation college students, and 37.6 percent are Pell Grant recipients. We want these young people to go to UNLV, have their opportunity to pursue their education in engineering and stay in southern Nevada to answer the workforce demands that we have. This project is a foundational piece to the expansion of a highly skilled workforce integral to southern Nevada's economic recovery.

With that, Dr. Meana addressed this a little earlier. Chancellor Reilly, I would like to hear your thoughts on the priority of making sure that when Nevada comes out of the pandemic situation we are in and our economic recovery is in place, that NSHE, the Board of Regents and UNLV will join many of us and continue to push for this building to become a reality.

CHANCELLOR REILLY:

We feel strongly about the need for this, for the economy, for our students, for UNLV. We appreciate those comments that this be a priority capital project in the future. The Board of Regents looked at ranking our programs. For the second half of this program, it rose to the top. You have a commitment from myself, and Dr. Meana can speak for herself, and the Board of Regents, we will continue to push and hope we can work with the Legislature and prioritize this project.

DR. MEANA:

Your comments are completely on target. In terms of workforce development, which ironically is going to be such a big part of the economic recovery, I would argue this college is and increasingly central to that effort. Those students are from here. They stay here. They are diverse. We train students to perform jobs that make up eight out of the ten top high-need jobs in this State. It is a tremendous need, and the return on that investment is going to be many fold. I hope it maintains its prominence in people's minds when we are prioritizing what to do with those funds when they become available.

DR. JOHNSON:

We are fortunate and thankful to the Legislature for participating in the financing of the Engineering Building in the 2017 Session, which is almost finished on the UNR campus. Engineering is a field in high demand. It is fundamental to the economic development and the entire State. The enthusiasm with which industry has responded to the fact that we are going to have modern facilities supporting faculty for research of education of engineers has been important. The UNR experience is this building is an important investment in the State of Nevada.

SENATOR WOODHOUSE:

Thank you all very much, especially Chancellor Reilly and Dr. Meana. As we move forward we will be together on this in trying to make sure this happens. I thank you all for all you do for our students who are in higher education.

SENATOR CANNIZZARO:

As a native Las Vegas, Nevadan, and a graduate from both UNR and UNLV, I see in this Body several graduates and former classmates and colleagues of mine who have benefited from the fact Nevada invested in a law school at UNLV, which is producing wonderfully talented graduates.

As we move forward, the more we continue to value the investment into higher education. We have been faced with some difficult decisions as a result of the current situation regarding the Engineering Building and the School of Medicine. I remain committed to ensure we pursue these same projects in the future. It matters to invest in students and higher education. These are worthwhile endeavors. There are many people in this Chamber who are committed to seeing these projects come forward in the future as the State's economy improves and gets back on track.

We will now open the hearing to public comment.

JOSHUA ZERBEL:

I want to comment on Thom Reilly's statement about there being no increased fees or increased costs for online courses. While it is true there is no institutional increase in costs, there are other fees involved. What happens is professors will use a third-party homework testing program which a student can only use for one semester. Those costs are upward from \$30 to \$50. Macmillan's LaunchPad costs \$93 per semester. Since we are moving to a large online presence, I worry that many professors will be disjointed, and all be using different programs so students will have to pay for two or three different online homework programs which could cost them upwards of \$200. I would like to see a mandate through NSHE that professors cannot use third-party homework testing programs and must use the WebCampus platform, which we use for everything else, and it is free.

As well, I would like to see some extra money going toward buying extra webcams that students could rent out of the library. What we have for rental of laptops are Chromebooks, and they do not work with proctoring programs. We need actual webcams. It is something that may be going on for the next couple of months. There needs to be systems in place before professors go wild and accidentally cause students to spend more money than they need to.

LAURA NAUMANN:

I am an Associate Professor of Psychology at NSC and this year's faculty Senate chair. I serve as chair for the NSHE council where I represent our two universities, the State college, our fall community colleges and the DRI.

We recognize the difficulty that our State is in and the challenge our State Legislators have in balancing the budget. The Governor asked higher education to prepare for cuts. Each institution developed a budget reduction plan that saves jobs and remains in our program. Furthermore, the

System was ... (unintelligible statement) ... fixable ... (unintelligible statement) ... to help bridge the gap when budget cuts were deeper than expected. Given the Governor's request and other constraints placed upon the System, faculty support the proposal before you. However, we must acknowledge the continued sacrifices being made by K-12 and higher education. Faculty, much like our safe fall features, are going above and beyond to academically serve our students and emotionally support them during these unprecedented times. We are being asked to do more work, often beyond the scope of our job description, with less resources and days lost to furlough while navigating our own personal challenges spurred by the coronavirus pandemic. In spite of these sacrifices, we continue to commit ourselves to advancing the mission of educating the citizens of Nevada and generating nationally recognized research and scholarships. These sacrifices are not sustainable. We hope the State finds itself in a position of generating more revenue than has been projected and that the federal government prioritizes additional stimulus funds to support education.

WISCLET ROUZARD:

I want to remind our Legislators to make sure you do not vote for any new taxes or tax increases. It is hard enough for individuals working in Nevada, currently on part-time hours or not working at all, who pay additional revenue to the government. It is applaudable that the government is making cuts, but more cuts are needed. If Nevadans have to make cuts in their personal lives, so should the government. There should be no conversation in regards to imposing State income tax. This opposes the very foundation of our amazing Battle Born State, which advocated for no State income tax when we first started out. The Legislature should understand why.

ADAM BARRINGTON:

I am a proud State of Nevada worker and a proud union member of AFSCME Local 4041. I want to address the previous caller. About taxes, the reason we have a crumbling healthcare infrastructure, a starving education system and are bombarded by regressive taxes, like a sales tax, is because the wealthy and the corporations in the State are not paying any taxes. There was over a billion dollars in subsidies just given to Tesla and hundreds of millions of other taxpayer dollars going to tax subsidies for other corporations. We pay \$750 million for a stadium that, for the foreseeable future, will go unused as long as we are responsible about this pandemic. Workers consistently foot the bill because of irresponsible choices made by capitalistic institutions and massive corporations, by robber barons. They flood the State of Nevada because it is a haven. It is like the Cayman Islands in the United States. This is unacceptable. It is unacceptable for massive corporations to get hundreds of millions of dollars in tax subsidies, billions in the case of Tesla, and at the same time pay their workers such low wages that we are forced to subsidize those low wages by paying into institutions like Medicaid. It is unacceptable, and it is immoral. The idea that we would cut spending for education and healthcare and give State workers a 5-percent pay cut, which is what essentially a furlough amounts to, when we have these massive corporations taking advantage of us and have these robber barons not paying a dime in taxes, this is a moral outrage and completely unacceptable. I hope the Nevada Legislature considers this when thinking about how we are going to fill this gap. You also need to tell the federal government that if they can bail out massive corporations of millionaires and billionaires, they can bail out state and local governments.

CARISSA MATTHEWS:

I am against because I am a single mom. I have two jobs, and it is still hard for me to pay bills. People are trying to add taxes to something that is already getting taken out. I think the Legislators should think really hard about adding more taxes to hinder poverty people anyway. It is only going to hinder us.

EVIANA DUVEER:

I would like to say "no" to the new taxes or any State income tax.

SENATOR CANNIZZARO:

We will open the hearing on Senate Bill No. 1.

WARD PATRICK (Administrator, State Public Works Division, Department of Administration):

This is the Governor's recommendation for General Fund reductions out of the Capital Improvement Planning (CIP) of to approximately \$72 million dollars. I appreciate all of the questions from yesterday and the attention to detail you provided. We are available to answer any questions you may have.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

I want to make sure I am understanding exactly what each section is doing. Section 1 looks like it is reducing the bond authorizations from the 2017 CIP in a total amount of \$6,856,296 and then booking them in section 2 into the CIP in 2019. Am I reading that correctly?

MR. PATRICK:

This bill is drafted by Legislative Legal and supported by LCB Fiscal. I understand LCB Fiscal is on the line. If they could answer those questions, I would greatly appreciate it.

BRODY LEISER (Principal Deputy Fiscal Analyst, Legislative Counsel Bureau):

In response to the Senator's question, it may be beneficial for the Senate members if I give a brief overview of the sections of the bill. The Senator from District 16 is correct in that section 1 of the bill amends section 6 of the 2017 CIP bill by revising bond authority in the 2017 approved projects of capital improvements to facilitate the repurposing of bond funds from 2017 projects to offset projects originally approved to be funded, in part, with General Funds. Mr. Patrick testified and referred to this as part of the sweeps.

These adjustments in section 1 are part of the CIP reduction plan and would repurpose bonds from 11 projects that are either closing out or have savings identified. The adjustments would result in the cancellation of project 17-M66 and the scope reduction for project 17-M70, as was previously presented last night by the State Public Works Division.

On page 7, line 19, there was a typographical error in the dollar amount reflected for the revision for project 17-M47. This amount will be corrected, but it will be corrected from what is reflected in the bill before you of \$310,927 to \$107,534. This correction will have no impact on the overall plan as proposed by the Governor.

Madam Chair, I believe that would answer the Senator's question. If you would like for me to continue going through the bill to summarize sections, I would be happy to do so.

SENATOR CANNIZZARO:

Yes, that would be helpful to go through the sections.

MR. LEISER:

In section 2, the bill amends section 6 of the 2019 CIP bill by revising bond authority in the 2019 approved projects to facilitate the repurposing of bond funds from both 2017 and 2019 projects to offset projects that were originally approved, in part, to be funded with General Funds. The adjustments in section 2 of the bill, as part of the overall CIP reduction plan proposed by the Governor, would repurpose bonds from two projects that are either closing out or have savings identified. This would result in the cancellation of the following projects: 19-C16, 19-M36 and 19-M50. The section would also result in the scope reduction of the following projects as presented by the State Public Works Division before the Committee last night. The scope reductions would be to 19-M14, 19-M20, 19-M30 and 19-S01. Adjustments in this section would also increase or establish bond authority to offset General Funds otherwise approved for 34, 2019 CIPs.

Section 3 of the bill facilitates the reversion of \$72,599,117 in General Fund appropriations as a result of the various proposals relating to CIP projects. The reversions are identified in association with the budget account in the State accounting system in which the various projects reverting funds have both their revenue and expenditure authority recorded. These reversions of General Funds is part of the overall CIP reduction proposal would result in the cancellation of the following projects: 19-C30, 19-M24, 19-M25, 19-M27 and 19-M48. Additionally, the reversion of General Funds in this section as part of the overall plan and would result in the reduction of scope for the following projects: 19-M53, 19-P01, 19-P08, 19-P70, 19-P71 and 19-S05.

In sections 4 and 5 of the bill there was approximately \$1.2 million in general obligation bond authority proposed to be repurposed to cover expenditures already paid for with General Funds in Fiscal Year 2020. This is an allowable use of bond funds within the IRS requirements and rules,

which allow for expenditures already paid for with General Funds under this scenario on or after the date of the issuance of the bonds. Those bonds were issued on December 10, 2019, that is the significance of the date you see in the legislation. Sections 4 and 5 of the bill ensure that the Department of Administration makes the necessary work-program adjustments to facilitate the individual project adjustments that are noted in sections 1 and 2 of the bill and effectuate the adjustments as of December 10, 2019.

Finally, section 6 of the bill states, "This act becomes effective upon passage and approval."

SENATOR OHRENSCHALL:

In section 2 of the bill, the allotments for the Nevada Department of Corrections that are in blue starting with "Replace surveillance system, Casa Grande Transitional Housing" and then to "Replace door locks and controls," "Ely State Prison, replace cooling towers, Southern Desert Correctional Center," "Install recreational yard fencing, Southern Desert Correctional Center," are those monies that are being restored? Could you explain what those are?

MR. LEISER:

The projects you are referring to were approved to be funded with General Fund appropriations in the 2019 CIP legislation. The adjustments in that section are allowing projects to be funded with general allocation bonds that otherwise swap General Funds originally approved for the project. Those projects and the revised dollar amounts you see are to allow those projects to be funded with general obligation bonds. Any offset General Funds would be included under the reversion section of the bill under section 3.

SENATOR OHRENSCHALL:

Mr. Patrick, if the 19-M20 project of the Caliente Youth Center is reduced in scope, how much longer will it take to move forward? Will the area where the kids are housed not be used, or is it going to deteriorate more? Can you give us a description about the 19-M20 project at the Caliente Youth Center?

MR. PATRICK:

The 19-M20 project replaces flooring in the Caliente Youth Center. What was stated last night is that these projects will be reconsidered in the 2021 CIP cycle. The Board of the Public Works Division hears all these projects again in August and makes recommendations in a prioritized order to the Governor's Office. These will be considered amongst all the projects that will be presented to the Governor's Office in a prioritized order.

SENATOR SPEARMAN:

What has become apparent to me from listening to all of the presentations is that we cannot "cut" ourselves out of this mess. Has anyone looked at the economic multiplier for these projects and how it may lessen the pain for people who will be experiencing the reductions? Looking at something I received from the Guinn Center, they estimate that the multiplier effect, if we chose as a State to do Public Works projects, would be for every one dollar spent, it would come back as \$1.50 in economic growth. Has anyone looked at what completing those projects would actually do in terms in lessening the pain?

MR. PATRICK:

I want to thank the Northern Nevada Association of General Contractors for listening in to the testimony and your question, Senator, last night. Although we cannot confirm the information, what we can do is ask that group to forward their information to you. This is our recommendation at this time, we do have a source for that type of information to be provided to you.

SENATOR SPEARMAN:

It would be important because one of the things I hope is considered is how these budget cuts are actually creating jobs as a result of the spending efforts contained in this bill. It is important so we can balance out the context in which we are talking about the budget shortfall. The economic multiplier is critical as we move forward to figure out how we are going to come out of this morass.

SENATOR DENIS:

When will these projects be put on the list for next Session's consideration? You mentioned they would be prioritized. How and when are those priorities developed?

MR. PATRICK:

In our Public Works Division, the State agency is overseen by a board of seven members with five members appointed by the Governor's Office, one by the Leader of the Senate and the Speaker of the House. That Board has developed a prioritization system, and we went over details last night. These will be prioritized by using the Board's system, and it is the Board's decision. They have given us priorities, and they will make the ultimate decision of what is forwarded to the Governor's Office.

SENATOR DENIS:

Since we have not had this kind of a situation, will they take that into consideration in the process they go through?

MR. PATRICK:

The question was, was this project previously funded, will that be taken under consideration? It is not specific in the criteria, but part of the criteria is if the project is a continuation project. When these projects have had a certain amount of design work done, that is part of the consideration.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

Looking at section 3, which has all of the \$72.6 million worth of reversions in it, in those subsections or paragraphs that align with budget accounts, you listed projects that I believe, are cancelled and reduced in scope. I have not gone through and done all of the math in section 2. If I take all of the savings from section 2 by shifting those projects to bond funds and then add up the cancellations you listed in the scope reductions, will all of that add up to \$72.6 million?

MR. LEISER:

The total General Fund savings adds up to this approximately \$72 million. As you noted, it is the result of various things including bond reductions, scope changes and cancellations. The total amount of bonds being repurposed to offset General Funds is approximately \$39 million. Part of the scope reductions and cancellations will make up the difference, if that answers the question.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

Are each of the individual projects listed somewhere in the bill by project number? I think that is what I am struggling with, or are some of the projects ... (unintelligible statement) ... in section 3?

MR. LEISER:

From an individual project perspective, the projects listed in the bill are projects that are having their bond authority adjusted to facilitate the overall plan. For example, the UNLV Engineering Building project 19-C30, that project is part of the Governor's overall plan with the CIP project reductions. That project cancellation and the \$20-million of General Fund associated with that is accounted for in the reversion amount listed under section 3 and included in the total reversion that is going to the budget account titled NSHE CIP projects.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

That was my question. So, there are projects within each of these paragraphs (a), (b) and (c), based on which budget account they are housed in, that are not outlined specifically in the bill.

MR. PATRICK:

In the two handouts discussed last night, there is a total of 58 projects on that list. Within Senate Bill No. 1, there are 57 specific projects listed of which Mr. Leiser pointed out engineering was wrapped up in a number for a certain budget account. All of the other 57 projects discussed the other evening and in the handouts are specifically listed in the bill.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

So, how many projects are omitted from Senate Bill No. 1?

MR. PATRICK:

All projects that are to be modified are included in Senate Bill No. 1. Only one is not specifically referenced, which is 19-C30, the UNLV Engineering Building. Mr. Leiser might be able to comment on why that one is not specifically listed. I believe it has something to do with it being a reimbursement-only project and not a General Fund swap project.

MR. LEISER:

In regard to that specific project, the legislation and the adjustments being made are to the projects that the bonding authority is being adjusted and are listed in sections 1 and 2. Project 19-C30 did not have any bonding authority to prove as part of the projects. Therefore, it is not listed in those sections. In part of the overall plan, it is mentioned that project is proposed for cancellation. Therefore, the General Fund appropriation associated with that project is included as part of section 3. By reverting the funds, the project would no longer have any General Fund appropriations.

SENATOR KIECKHEFER:

Are there other projects, for example, in the NSHE CIP Projects Account that could theoretically be defunded? Usually, we approve on a project-by-project basis, and that is why I am confused. It is sort of a lump sum, and the Legislature is not going to see it again. Within that budget account, is there anything that specifies which project we are cancelling?

MR. LEISER:

There is nothing specifically in the legislation that clearly states what specific project as being cancelled or projects that have scope reductions. They are identified on the material that was presented by the State Public Works Board, and it identified project by project as to what the action is being proposed as part of the overall plan.

SENATOR PARKS:

I would like to go to Project 17-C14, the demolition of the Kincaid Building. Now, the Kincaid Building has been vacant for 15 years. It has been on the demolition condemnation list all that time. Is there something happening at this point that requires that building to be demolished? I know it needs to be, but it has been 15 years. We have not demolished it. Is there another project that is scheduled to go on that site, and that is why it needs to be demolished at this time? If that is not the case, then here is \$1.7 million that might be better allocated toward another program. One that comes to mind is Project 19-C30, the Engineering Building at UNLV. If you have any input on that. I would appreciate it.

MR. PATRICK:

17-C14 was the first project completed out of the 2017 CIP. The Kincaid Building demolition was completed actually before my predecessor, Mr. Gus Nunez, retired around December of 2017. That project and most all of the money has been spent out of that fund. I believe there is approximately \$30,000 remaining in the project.

SENATOR PARKS:

So, the building has been demolished?

MR. PATRICK:

Correct.

SENATOR SPEARMAN:

I think what we are looking at here, and I wish these searches had been combined, because of what a colleague from Henderson wrapped up, when we talk about the Engineering Building, we are not just talking numbers; we are talking about economic multipliers. We are talking about opportunities for people in southern Nevada, specifically for people of color in southern Nevada. It is important to bear that in mind. Again, we are not just talking about numbers; we are talking about people.

SENATOR GOICOECHEA:

How many of these projects listed have been completed or the majority of the project is spent?

MR. PATRICK:

We do not have a precise count to present today, but that information can be presented to you. Keep in mind that all of these projects were reviewed to see if they can somehow contribute to the solution and decrease the number of projects that would be cancelled or projects that would have its scope reduced. We can provide you with a report on projects that are complete.

SENATOR GOICOECHEA:

It is somewhat confusing. We are booking dollars here on projects that clearly are completed or have very little residual money in them. If that could be cleaned up. If you walk through the numbers and understand them like you do, it probably makes sense. As I look at the numbers, if they have been completed, we do not know that.

MR. PATRICK:

Many of the projects in the 17 CIP are bond-funded. There are basically few changes to those projects here. Those projects, that have only a small residual, were not considered as part of the solution to remove complexity in making the overall presentation. So, bigger projects, bigger dollar-number donors were utilized to decrease the complexity of the presentation.

SENATOR SEEVERS GANSERT:

I am circling back to the math. In section 3, should those different categories add up to the total \$72,599,117? Should this bill add up to what we are trying to eliminate or swap in the spreadsheets that you provided yesterday? I do not think it is adding up. I do not know. The way the bill is written, it is hard to check the math on it, make sure we captured everything.

MR. LEISER:

In section 3, the amounts sum up to the total General Funds savings of \$72,599,117. The dollar amounts listed in section 3 represent the General Fund savings to the projects.

SENATOR SEEVERS-GANSERT:

I am trying to redo the math again because I was not getting that. The way it is written, it is hard to check the math to make sure we have everything in here. I am off by a million dollars, but I might be rounding because I was only going for the first five digits, so tens of thousands into the thousands. As long as it is all in there. Again, it is hard to follow because of the way it is put together.

SENATOR CANNIZZARO:

We will now open the hearing to public comment.
There being none, today's Agenda is closed.

On the motion of Senator Woodhouse, seconded by Senator Parks, the Committee did rise and report back to the Senate.

SENATE IN SESSION

At 8:40 p.m.

President Marshall presiding.

Quorum present.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEE

Madam President:

Your Committee of the Whole has considered Senate Bill No. 1 and other matters relating to the State's budget shortfall.

NICOLE CANNIZZARO, *Chair*

INTRODUCTION, FIRST READING AND REFERENCE

By the Committee of the Whole:

Senate Bill No. 4—AN ACT relating to state securities; authorizing the State Board of Finance to issue interim debentures to fund the general operations of the State; revising provisions governing payments made from the Consolidated Bond Interest and Redemption Fund; revising provisions governing the fixing of interest rates for certain state securities; revising provisions governing the issuance of interim debentures; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Senator Cannizzaro moved that the bill be referred to the Committee of the Whole.

Motion carried.

Senator Cannizzaro moved that the Senate adjourn until Friday, July 10, 2020, at 10:00 a.m.

Motion carried.

Senate adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Approved:

KATE MARSHALL
President of the Senate

Attest: CLAIRE J. CLIFT
Secretary of the Senate