

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

JULY 1, 2016

The meeting of the Advisory Committee to Develop a Plan to Reorganize the Clark County School District was called to order by Chair Michael Roberson at 9:41 a.m. at the Grant Sawyer Building, Room 4412, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada, and via videoconference at the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Room 3137, Carson City, Nevada. Exhibit A is the Agenda and Exhibit B is the Attendance Roster. All exhibits are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT (LAS VEGAS):

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

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT (VIA PHONE):

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

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

OTHERS PRESENT:

Annalise Castor, Break Free CCSD

Lindsey Dalley, Moapa Valley A.B. 394 Community Education Advisory Board
Task Force

Lisa Mayo-Deriso, Break Free CCSD

Autumn Tampa

Caryne Shea, Honoring our Public Education (HOPE)

Heather Witt

Stephen Augspurger, Executive Director, Clark County Association of School
Administrators and Professional-Technical Employees

Katie Decker, CCSD Principal, Walter Bracken Elementary School, Howard
Hollingsworth Elementary School and Walter Long Elementary School

Antonio Rael, CCSD Principal, Mojave High School

Michael Strembitsky, International Consultant; Former Superintendent of Schools,
Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada

Pat Skorkowsky, Superintendent, Clark County School District

John Vellardita, Executive Director, Clark County Education Association

Guillermo Vazquez, Executive Director, Educational Support Employees Association

Sylvia Lazos, Vice Chair, Latino Leadership Council; Policy Director, Educate
Nevada Now

Anna Slighting

Chair Roberson:

I will open the seventh meeting of the Advisory Committee to Develop a Plan to
Reorganize the Clark County School District (CCSD) with Item II, public comment.

Annalise Castor (Break Free CCSD):

We are so excited about this plan and so thankful for the time and energy everyone is
putting into this plan to really help change education in Nevada. Thank you so much.
We are grateful to Mr. Strembitsky for the plan he put together. We have talked to
people in the community about the plan and think there is so much good but one thing
our e-mail and Facebook subscribers have noticed was that there is not enough “teeth”
in the proposal. These people have consistently used the word “teeth.” They ask,
“Where is the real muscle that is going to make this happen?”

**Lindsey Dalley (Moapa Valley A.B. 394 Community Education Advisory Board
Task Force):**

We have met with Mr. Strembitsky and support his plan, but we need to add more
regulatory teeth to protect our schools from the established CCSD administrative culture
and any potential insidious return so it will not interfere with the final Advisory
Committee's plan. The draft regulations grant the CCSD superintendent a triad of power
without community checks and balances. This undermines a community's culture.

The first triad leg directs that the money goes to superintendent first and the
superintendent determines how much money each school gets through the per pupil

process. The second leg of the triad is that even though the school creates the budget, the superintendent has total control over the individual school budget process through the associate superintendent. There is an appeals process, but this leads into the final power triad leg where the superintendent has total control over school principal employment. This generates loyalty back to the superintendent's office, not to the school or community.

This completes the trifecta of power that could be used to manipulate control away from individual schools and communities. It will happen with the best of intentions. For example, if a school proposes a budget that is unique to accommodate their culture and the associate superintendent disagrees because he or she does not understand that culture and then the budget is appealed over that assistant superintendents head, we all know there are administrative personalities out there who would go to that principal and make it known with the unseen sledge hammer, "If you know what's good for your career, do not do that again." This is how the intimidation process begins.

Over the last 14 years, Moapa Valley's experience has been that higher administrative levels thwart and stifle school culture and autonomy because it is all about where the loyalty lies. The principals want their jobs. Mr. Strembitsky will not be here for 10 years; therefore, the regulations need to limit this power and return administrative loyalty back to the community and the schools. We also need to establish teeth in the regulations to ensure the plan is not undone, "for our own good."

We in Moapa Valley are scared to death by unchecked upper administration power. Please enact regulations to establish long-term checks and balances that preserve a community's culture.

Lisa Mayo-Deriso (Break Free CCSD):

I am here as a parent of two children in the CCSD. In my last testimony on June 16, I brought up the idea of making sure we had transition costs and that we were accounting for the cost of the reorganization. I want to thank Mr. Strembitsky for including that. I have submitted my written testimony ([Agenda Item II-A](#))

Autumn Tampa:

I am a community member, CCSD employee and a member of the Education Support Employees Association (ESEA) that represents approximately 11,500 support staff employees in the District. I have worked at CCSD for more than 18 years in 160 schools servicing about 35,000 students. We appreciate the work you are doing on behalf of the children of Nevada, but as education support staff or "classified" employees, we feel we are missing out of most conversations on this reorganization. It is the roles and influences of these employees who touch the lives of all the CCSD children in a huge variety of ways—clerical staff, bus drivers, transportation aides, food service workers,

custodians, hall monitors, electricians and so many more, all participating in making our school district run smoothly. I have submitted my written testimony ([Agenda Item II-B](#))

Caryne Shea (Honoring our Public Education (HOPE)):

Given this reorganization plan's faster timeline and the many questions the plan raises regarding adequate resources to fund it, our desire is that this effort not become another failed attempt to realize the goal of increased student achievement. We have important concerns that I have submitted in my written testimony ([Agenda Item II-C](#)).

Heather Witt:

I am a 7th grade science teacher as well as a graduate of CCSD; born and raised in Las Vegas. Since the implementation of the No Child Left Behind Act, science has received fewer and fewer minutes of instruction in the elementary classroom due to a focus on math and English language arts. A recent survey of science teachers nationwide shows that only 49 percent of secondary science teachers feel their administration supports science. With this new funding structure, I am concerned there will be a lack of adequate funding to support science in our schools. Where I now teach, a science position has been left open due to budgetary concerns. This means larger class sizes for next year's science teachers.

I am also concerned about the provision for schools to choose their own curriculum. Due to the transient nature of the Clark County School District (CCSD), this could lead to gaps in education for many students. Already, the implementation for the Nevada Academic Content Standards for science, based on the next generation science standards, has been rocky at best due to misunderstandings, lack of communication and support and a lack of administrative involvement.

Additionally, I am concerned about the decentralization of the Instructional Design and Professional Learning Division (IDPL). Due to the reduction in staff, it falls solely on the teachers to continue to develop curriculum, develop professional development for other teachers and facilitate those professional developments, all while continuing to teach in their own classrooms. The IDPL is currently setting up task forces of teachers, however, there were few teachers attending the initial meetings for these task forces. I fear that without more support for and from IDPL, the new standards will not be taught equitably across all schools because teachers will not be provided with the professional development or administrative support needed to understand the pedagogical shifts required to correctly implement the standards.

Stephen Augspurger (Executive Director, Clark County Association of School Administrators and Professional-Technical Employees):

With me today are two outstanding CCSD principals—Katie Decker, the principal of three elementary schools—Long, Bracken and Hollingsworth—under a new franchise program that began this year, and Antonio Rael, the principle of Mojave High School, a

school that was formerly a Turnaround School. We have a great concept in this reorganization plan that we completely support. However, the concept is never going to be successful unless we have more operational details. We need to have people in the weeds working on each of these issues. We had one meeting on June 6 with Mr. Strembitsky and we have another one scheduled. I think it is important to hear principal's voices since they are going to be on the ground implementing these changes as they work with teachers, business people and community members.

Katie Decker (CCSD Principal, Walter Bracken Elementary School, Howard Hollingsworth Elementary School and Walter Long Elementary School):

We are speaking for other principals who would like to have a voice at the table on this reorganization process. Looking over the reorganization plan, some of the principals are concerned that the principals themselves have no vote on their school's committee. It is only one vote and should not weigh more than anyone else's vote, but being a part of the team and having a vote would be appropriate.

Regarding transients moving from school to school, as a principal of three schools, one thing I can tell you is that we all teach the same curriculum. The tools we use to teach could vary from site to site based on passion, choice or selection. We have done the system where we choose only one program to teach but it was not successful because there was no buy-in at the site. I would argue that a transient child already has an uphill battle just by having to move from school to school. However, if each school is striving for excellence, consistency and delivering that same high quality curriculum, the tools that are used are not quite as relevant as the implementation of the tools. It stops progress if we are told what tool to use instead of just letting us get results for the kids.

Antonio Rael (CCSD Principal, Mojave High School):

I want to start with a quote: "Let's not let perfect be the enemy of good." I know there is much to be figured out in this process but the idea is a very strong one that we support fully. We do have some specific concerns, mostly rooted in the lack of fine details. Who will figure out the lacking details from this plan going forward? This reorganization plan is predicated on the leadership at the school level—the principal. However, there has been no systematic or formal process to include principals in this conversation. My suggestion is that we include principals to help figure out the details. I support the idea of having teachers, support staff and community members in that conversation as well. Those who are doing the work should be involved in the conversation because they have the expertise of the day-to-day reality of the school.

Regarding funding, I love the dialogue in this group and our State overall about the weighted funding formula. It is interesting that as we talk about that, we also respond by giving an average salary for teachers in schools as the recommendation. We, the collective principals, in our conversations the last few days, do not fully understand how you will have transparency and efficiency determining how money is spent at CCSD if

we just allocate average numbers for positions at the school level. I cannot imagine a scenario in the business world where that would be accepted and I do not know how that fits into this conversation. We need to know the actual dollar amount it costs to run a school and the difference between schools. We need to then figure out how we use that most effectively.

Our recommendation is that we use real dollar amounts for schools, not average salaries. That is the supporting metric necessary to determine if schools and students in at-risk areas are actually receiving appropriate funding levels. You can say we are getting differentiated funding for our students, but then if you use average cost of teachers, it actually is not a true number going forward if the teachers' cost differences are not recognized from school to school overall.

I also wanted to touch on what it looks like for autonomy of hiring teachers, support staff and administrative teams when you have collective bargain agreements to contend with. What do you do when you have employees who moved or are surplus? How does that give autonomy at the school level to make decisions?

Finally, we have talked much about the empowerment model as a pilot for what has been successful. I also want to point to the model of the Turnaround Zone, recently within CCSD, where the philosophy of leadership is very much in line with this model going forward—empowering building-level decision makers to make good decisions with the knowledge they have for their buildings. If you look at the data over the past 5 years within the Turnaround Zone, schools have been highly successful in raising the achievement bar overall. While I think it is great that we look at the empowerment model, the Turnaround Zone has adopted that same philosophy with the right supports where the leadership is not about making decisions for the school, but to support the decisions made at the school level.

Mr. Augspurger:

In the draft regulations (Agenda Item V-A), there is language that really speaks to what these two principals have talked about. On page 1, section 11, where it says that the responsibilities will be transferred to every local precinct will be identified, if you go to page 2, it speaks specifically to what Antonio just raised as a concern. Subsection 2, paragraph (a) says selection of staff at the school will include teachers, administrators other than the principal, and other staff. If we are truly moving toward a decentralized system and if we are truly serious about giving those precincts and those people who work in those buildings autonomy over how they run their building and hire their staff, then we have to protect that right in each of those precincts. No longer should CCSD have the ability to assign—over the wishes of a precinct team consisting of teachers, support staff and principal—a poorly performing employee to a school. It would not matter whether this was a support staff employee, a teacher or a principal. The District

should find another mechanism for dealing with that issue rather than just reinserting them back into a building against the wishes of a precinct team.

For example, we have principal now who, with the strategic budget, identified an additional assistant principal position, funded it with school dollars but was not able to fill the position because the District had to reassign someone else to that position. Hopefully, that will get cleared up, but that is the culture we have. I am not being critical of anyone; it is just the way we have always done business. Performance matters. We want to have great people performing in schools; those who cannot perform should not be inserted into a culture and environment that is being developed under this process.

In Section 11, subsection 2, paragraph (d) (Agenda Item V-A) it states, “Any other responsibility designated by the Superintendent” can be passed on to the schools. Again, in a concept where we are involving stakeholders, that wording needs to be with the permission of, in discussion with or in consultation with, etc. This is not just a unilateral decision, so this language cleanup would be more consistent with the philosophy of this movement.

Section 11, subsection 4 (Agenda Item V-A) is the same, stating that, “on or before January 1, the Superintendent shall determine any additional responsibilities not listed.” We want to have a collaborative process for how that works and agreement with the people who will be the end recipients.

Section 13 (Agenda Item V-A) includes something that comes up in many places, having to do with the responsibility for local school precincts and services that were formerly with CCSD. One concern about this detail is that if I were working in a new school with new equipment, I would not be worried about my air conditioner. If I were working in schools where Katie Decker is principal, I would be scared to death if I was going to be responsible for maintenance on those kinds of things. So we have to be very careful which services remain central, which go to the school and how the dollars are put in those accounts.

Section 15 (Agenda Item V-A) addresses the new position identified as the associate superintendent. To me, what we have done is to closely replicate the same set of conditions we now have with the existing position of assistant chief superintendent that supervises principals. We are going to trade that position for an associate superintendent who will train and supervise the school principal. If we are really serious about moving toward an autonomous model, we have to spend time creating a system that will appropriately evaluate principals working in those environments. It cannot be the same top-down work that occurs now.

If we follow Section 15, subsection 3, “the school associate superintendent must be held accountable for all aspects of the performance of the local school precinct,” we will

guarantee that it will be top-down because they will insert themselves in every way possible. Not everyone, but many will do that.

Section 19 (pages 5 and 6, Agenda Item V-A) creates the organizational team of a school precinct in a process designed to be inclusive and give people a voice. I do not know if not giving principals a vote was an oversight or a typo, but we need to make sure the principal has a vote at that table. Where we are headed with this plan is the right place to go. How we get there is very important. We need far more details and a lot of time to flesh it out. There has to be some identification of who will be responsible for developing those operational procedures. It will be so important to work this through successfully.

Chair Roberson:

I do want to assure everyone that while we may vote on a preliminary plan today to move the process forward because we are required to hold 6 public meetings, this will not be the final plan. We will continue to refine and make changes to this plan, based on the meetings with the community and others. We will continue to work on this throughout the summer and I am hopeful that at least conceptually—even more than conceptually because we do have a fair number of details in here—we will be able to move forward to meet these timelines. This Advisory Committee will continue to meet for up to the next 2 years to implement this plan, so this process is a long way from being over. There will be 2 years of oversight from this Committee on the process. I agree with many of the issues you have raised, Mr. Augspurger, and we will resolve them, hopefully by the end of this summer. I would love to see us in a position to vote on a final plan by the end of August.

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

I think the Chair has done a fantastic job of trying to be inclusive; getting as much input as we could from the community and all interested stakeholders. I appreciate that. I do have some misgivings now, which have arisen since our last meeting. One is the universal recognition that a good school begins with a principal, yet I was a bit dismayed to hear that principals have not been at the table as much as they needed to be. If we are acknowledging universally that principals need to be well trained and the leaders of the school, then they should have been at these meetings and probably on the Technical Advisory Committee to this Advisory Committee. I take some blame for that because I did not recognize it until conversations took place. If we are going to require principals to implement this plan, especially on an accelerated timeframe, then we need to have more input from these principals so we can ensure that we are not setting ourselves up for failure. We have been meeting for months and this is not a plan that needs to be set up for failure by virtue of the fact that we are excluding voices that need to be included at the table.

I am happy to hear the Chair acknowledge that this is not over. Even if we vote on this proposal today, my vote for it would be entirely contingent on the understanding that we have every voice that is necessary included so we can make a good plan in a timeframe that makes sense and under a monetary arrangement that makes sense. I am still not convinced this is revenue neutral. Training will cost money and even if you are going to be shifting funds around between programs and departments, those savings will not be realized immediately; freeing up funds so you can spend monies on the training. It will take time before you realize those savings. Not to mention the fact that we have to have the conversation about what it looks like when you have layoffs and consider what could happen under the Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act and other labor acts related to mass layoffs for reorganizations.

Again, I want to make an express effort and request to Mr. Strembitsky that the principals be a lot more included in the discussions about the implementation of this plan. The Chair has done a fantastic job of being inclusive but I think we have fallen short on the inclusiveness of the principals in this process.

Chair Roberson:

Thank you; your comments are very well taken and the principals do need to be a very big part of this and they will be.

Senator Becky Harris (Senatorial District No. 9):

I recognized early that we had a lack of principal participation. As Chair of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to this CCSD Reorganization Advisory Committee, as well as Chair of the Senate Committee on Education, I personally reached out to the principals and had a meeting to help bring them into the discussion. I invited them to come into my Committee to share their perspective because I felt it was critical that the members on my Committee understand the situation principals find themselves in so they could help us recognize the kinds of resources necessary to make this plan successful. We are very invested in this plan and we want to give principals the resources necessary to help them be successful. I want to give some assurances to Senator Ford that principals have not been completely overlooked. I look forward to continuing our conversations. I want to take a quick minute to thank these two principals here for the hard work you do for our kids here in Clark County. You are two of the best and why this plan will be successful.

Assemblywoman Dina Neal (Assembly District No. 7):

Mr. Augspurger brought up section 11, subsection 4 (page 2, Agenda Item V-A) of the draft regulations regarding the superintendent being able to determine additional responsibilities. Checks and balances clearly need to be there, but how do you propose that they actually exist versus your will and their will? Second, you said “appropriately evaluate principals.” What is the mechanism you think is fair for evaluating principals? Would either the site team or another team have the ability to fairly review the work of a

principal? We have had issues with how people are evaluated fairly going back about 20 years ago. There are issues in terms of diversity around this subject.

Mr. Augspurger:

Moving toward a decentralized model gives us an opportunity to address how we can best evaluate a principal in a decentralized system. One thing we would like to assume, even though we know it is not true, is that there should be no poorly performing principals. In fact, the role of the associate superintendent should not be to be evaluate or issue edict; it should be to be a thought partner, to work with, collaborate and help extend the perspective and the vision of that school principal by being a resource. When a principal cannot get a service that is absolutely necessary, the associate superintendent is the one delivering that service. In my mind, we should be doing just the opposite. That associate superintendent should be evaluated by the number of principals and those school teams, not the other way around because all we would be doing is replicating the same model we have right now.

Regarding the checks and balances, moving away from a top-down organizational structure and instead giving credence to the school team, no one should have the right to superimpose a decision over that school team. Maybe there are some things associated with safety and student welfare that someone just has to decide, but if the superintendent makes a determination that a certain service now coming from central is going to be passed on to the school, that should not happen without a prescribed methodology. Otherwise, it will be easy just to give one more thing to the schools to do and principals may soon find that they do not have time to be instructional leaders anymore because they have too much to do. They should only do the things that are most important to help them leverage student achievement.

Assemblywoman Neal:

I hear you, but I need to put it into context with what I have experienced. I had Mr. Strembitsky come to Kermit R. Booker, Sr. Elementary School to talk with the principal and staff. I came in there assuming that teachers knew what was going on. They did not; probably because they are busy teaching. The principal was trying to break it down and explain the reorganization plan and it was almost like Greek to them. They did not understand what their role would be and what they could do in the process; they were completely oblivious to what is going on and they and did not have the time to research it. I came in as a Legislator on their campus, teaching, so I have a different and unique perspective. I have a law degree, so I am in the space and I know what is going on, but they had no clue.

The principal being the single leader and the single information giver is not appropriate and should not go forward. Even the few people who might have had information as site leaders did not know what was going on, nor did they see themselves as having power. That powerlessness is going to keep teachers and staff from speaking up because of

the existing top-down structure that has always told them to get in line. They do not know how to reach back up and say, "This is totally not acceptable; I am a partner in this." We started this conversation about organizational pathology. That is real, yet we keep acting like it is not part of the structure. There is an embedded culture and belief in the system. I hear all these words, and words matter, but not unless they get into the psyche. How do you empower teachers within this process to make them feel they are a partner?

Mr. Rael:

I want to give you some concrete examples of how this culture is changing that I think will be an encouragement to your concerns overall. Early last spring, our CCSD Superintendent agreed to invite principals into the workstream meetings across the District in an advisory capacity. The concerns you shared about the relationship between principals and teachers and campuses was a concern principals shared with District leadership—the lack of communication and understanding of what was happening. The Superintendent's response, which is already in place now, was to invite principals to the table for those conversations. That has resulted in direct principal input on decision making at the District level. I cannot speak for what is happening on other school campuses, but I have also replicated that model in my own school; inviting teachers into each of our main workstream meetings to ensure they are not just having global communication that is top-down, but that they are at the table for all of the decision making. So while I do not think the model we have right now is perfect, it is better than what we had before and it is something we can learn from over the next 12 months.

Assemblywoman Neal:

What happened at that meeting was that the teachers left and went to their classroom without the ability to process the information and how it would affect their job as a teacher. It just seemed like another rule on top of the 15 other rules they had to follow while they still had to go back to their classrooms and teach. The teachers themselves did not feel empowered; they felt totally overwhelmed. I was there and I thought, "Somebody is losing their mind if you think that every single week and every single meeting I am getting ready to interpret and apply all of these things you just said into the next 3 days."

Mr. Rael:

I apologize if I did not explain clearly on what the model looks like. It is a not top-down communication model to be there to understand what is happening; it is a model of being there when decisions are being made, which is very different. That is what is happening in my building. I cannot speak to your direct experience, but I know that there are other models that are contrary to that. I do believe the model we are implementing on a trial basis for the next year is to have those principals make decisions at the District level and so, too, teachers at the school level.

Ms. Decker:

To reassure you, having the opportunity to have three schools was a great benefit because Bracken Elementary was an empowerment school, so my staff there already operated as an independent collective group to make decisions. They vote on everything. I would never override a decision they make. The majority rules; you implement it like it was your idea. That is our rule. After I went to Long Elementary School, it shocked me that they were not questioning things or asking questions. It took the whole year to get that staff to the point where now they are coming up with ideas and solutions and solving problems like never before. It is a complete transformation. Now, starting at Hollingsworth Elementary, I see the timidity, fear and the unwillingness to question decisions, which is what I encourage because I cannot make every decision correctly and I do not want to make every decision. I want to hear from parents, community partners and teachers—that is the empowerment model.

It does not happen overnight; it takes time to build back trust for teachers to feel free to question. That is our rule. You can come to me with any concern; you just have to come with a couple of solutions and if you do not have solutions, you have to be willing to listen. If it works, we will do it. That is the philosophy behind empowerment. It will get there. You walked into a staff that did not quite have that empowerment mentality in place, but if you walked into my staff for a similar meeting, you would have experienced something completely different.

Mr. Augspurger:

In section 15 that talks about the associate superintendent (page 4, Agenda Item V-A), it is very clear that this person will do the training of the principals. If it were me, listening to these two principals, who would you rather have do training? If we could find principals who are already involved in this model of empowerment and know how to involve people in decision making, those are the people we need to have do the training; not an associate superintendent who has never done that job before.

Chair Roberson:

I will close public comment and open Agenda Item V, a progress report from the consultant, Michael Strembitsky. Before we get into the plan, the Technical Advisory Committee to this Advisory Committee held a work session and made certain recommendations concerning the proposed plan. I have asked Mr. Strembitsky to briefly address how he has handled those recommendations.

Michael Strembitsky (International Consultant, Former Superintendent of Schools, Edmonton Public Schools, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada):

Before I begin, I apologize for missing the principal meeting. Secondly, dealing with the report of the Technical Advisory Committee (Agenda Item V-B), I read the entire report and as a lifelong teacher, I found myself in agreement with so many of the things being put forward. Then when I began to look at the particular charge of the reorganization,

I began to feel like I was Mr. Scrooge because I could not incorporate so many of the things. With the best of intention, so many of the recommendations and suggestions were “should” and reflected things I agree with, but on the other hand I was dealing with the reality that was before us.

On June 17, I attended the work session of the Technical Advisory Committee to Develop a Plan to Reorganize the Clark County School District and listened to the concerns and recommendations of the members. To the extent that I was able to incorporate the recommendations that were consistent with the direction given to me by this Advisory Committee, I have incorporated those into the plan. Some of the recommendations are outside the scope of the current plan or required statutory changes, so they were not included in the plan. Other recommendations will be kept in mind in the implementation as the plan is carried out and worked in where possible if consistent with the direction of this Committee.

Today represents 3 months since I first became involved with this enterprise. I make no apologies for how far we have come in the 3 months. I say “we” because I have been part of it, but there has been cooperation by so many groups including the two Committees of Legislators and community people. As we think about going forward, in the next 6 months, the major work is to put in place an infrastructure by which the schools can navigate to be successful. Without that infrastructure, we will be lost at sea.

Then the next 6 months, comprised of two 3-month periods, will be the time in which the schools begin to do their rollout. I agree totally with all I have heard about how many people need to be involved, but it is a matter of the staging. I commend all the people here. Frankly, I have not been involved with a large school district where people are so willing to put aside things in the margin for the greater good of the bigger enterprise.

I want to go through the recommendations in the report (Agenda Item V-B). On pages 5 and 6, those have been included in the plan. On page 6, the section on educating professionals, the first recommendation about increasing salaries and staffing each classroom with a licensed teacher was not included because it is outside the current scope. This does not mean I do not agree with it; it is just outside the scope. The rest of the three recommendations on that page and section were included in the plan.

On page 7 (Agenda Item V-B) under local control and governance, the second and third recommendations on site-based decision making teams were incorporated into the plan to a certain extent. In the proposed regulations, these are called “organizational teams.” The first recommendation on page 7 to establish optional education councils and the fourth recommendation to provide stipends for parents who serve on the school site governance boards were not included in the plan. At this time, the changes being proposed are so major that I would recommend we see how that works before we take

additional measures. So it is not that I am against those suggestions; it is again a matter of the staging.

The plan does, however, emphasize the importance of parent and community involvement and makes the principal of the school responsible for creating a culture that embraces the contributions of parents and community members. In the plan you will see an opportunity for parents to become members of an organizational team to help develop the plan of operation in the local school precinct. Surveys are provided to parents and guardians each year to determine their satisfaction levels with the local school precinct and public meetings to the school's budget and any plans for improvement.

I have heard people talk about the past and how people behaved. That is a culture. This whole plan is predicated on a different culture, period. People are having difficulty believing that the people in one culture can become operators and participants in a different culture. I maintain that people can change within the culture. I have had experiences with this. Yes, there are things we can safeguard in regulations, but ultimately the greatest safeguard we have is our own behavior. This happens at two levels—at the superintendent and the Superintendency, and at the Principalship level of the schools. Once engrained, no one will take away that culture because it is inherent and not a matter of a new leader coming to town who can take you off in another direction. The culture is so strong, they will do it the “Clark County way” and indeed you will have people who will want to access your leaders rather than you accessing them from the outside. We are not there in the development of that culture yet, but that is the first part of the changeover. Without that change in culture, the rest will fail.

The last recommendation (page 7, Agenda Item V-B) under local governance about site-based decision making teams having input in the selection of teachers, etc., has been partly addressed in the proposed regulations (Agenda Item V-A), which allow an organizational team to provide a list of desired characteristics of a principal when a new principal is being selected for a local precinct. It also requires the organization team to help the principal develop a school's budget and any plan for improving the school.

Regarding the selection of principals, when things are working right, it is not a problem. When things are not working right and when push comes to shove, there has to be a clear line of where the accountability and responsibility rests. One dilemma I have been faced with in these recommendations in talking about a cultural change is that in most cases, this will not be an issue. But when it does become an issue in terms of accountability, this is why I have said that with the great involvement at the school, it is great, but if things falter, where is the accountability?

If the school team keeps making decisions and they work great, that is fine. But if ultimately a decision is wrong, then who is held accountable? The provision is that at

that point, the principal is still accountable. He or she can make a decision but if it is made in the proper spirit of the culture, there will be an explanation offered behind that decision and how it relates to the goals of that school. That way, if the team did not agree with that decision and appealed it to an associate superintendent, it would not be on the basis of whim or fancy; it would be on the basis of keeping with the culture and what the outcomes and expectations are for that school.

Do I anticipate that there will be reams of these appeals? Of course not. If you have the right culture, that does not happen. Ultimately, the whole thing comes down to the accountability question, which I have heard stressed over and over again right from the school level up to the school board and into the State level.

Senator Ford:

Fantastic point. As you were talking about site-based decision making teams having input into the selection of teachers, etc., and making decisions regarding school expenditures, I wrote down, “accountability for bad decisions.” We have been presuming good intentions, but sometimes decisions have underlying bad intentions. If someone, for example, wanted to sue because they felt they were wrongfully discriminated in the hiring process, they are not going to be suing the site-based decision team; they will be suing the Clark County School District and the ultimate person responsible for it—the CCSD Superintendent.

It speaks to the question Mr. Dalley brought up about a superintendent having total control of a school principal’s employment. We need a balance, but at the end of the day, it comes down to accountability. I want to ensure that we keep in the back of our minds the reminder that we cannot diffuse so much of the responsibility and accountability such that the individual ultimately held responsible for the overall well-being of a school, which is the principal, and the school district, which is the superintendent, essentially has no control.

Mr. Strembitsky:

This morning when the item came up that the principals were not voting members of the school team and therefore are slighted, I understood that, but there is a difficulty I have encountered in the past. If the principal is a voting member of that team and then the recommendation goes to the principal and that principal cannot agree with it, we wind up with a situation where someone says, “How can you disagree with it? You were on the team; you had a vote.” My intent is not to slight the principal as an integral, important member of the team, but I have no difficulty with it either way, providing you understand that if the principal is a voting member of the team, he or she is then voting to themselves at a later stage if things go wrong. When you have a situation like Ms. Decker outlined where everything is going right, this is not an issue. I am looking at this as a safeguard for principals not doing as well.

Senator Denis:

I appreciate that the issue of transiency was brought up. I also think the issue of the site-based management is at the core of this plan.

Mr. Strembitsky:

The initial concern raised about transiency had to do with the feeder pattern and the transiency within that. I have asked for information to check the transiency within a feeder pattern and the incidence of transiency that goes outside the feeder patterns. That information will be forthcoming at a later date.

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

Is it your intention to have additional meetings with the principals?

Mr. Strembitsky:

Of course. I was sorry I did not make that meeting; it was inexcusable. I hear loud and clear the comments that the teachers do not know about this. When I met with the staff at Booker Elementary which Assemblywoman Neil arranged, we got caught in a Catch-22 because on one hand we are deciding whether certain things can go forward conceptually, etc., and on the other hand, people at the other end, the teachers and support staff, want to know everything about it. It is difficult to communicate fully about things that are in progress. It is going to be a filtering all the way through. The communication cannot just be that someone has something in writing—it is the internalization and understanding at each level that matters in the transition plan.

Assemblywoman Neal:

On the question of principals evaluating the associate superintendent, what do you think of that?

Mr. Strembitsky:

It has to happen.

Assemblywoman Neal:

So you think it is a good thing for the principals to evaluate the associate superintendents rather than the other way around?

Mr. Strembitsky:

I want to be careful about the word “evaluate.” Legally, there is a definition, but the reality is that there has to be information all the way through and it is not only one way. The teachers and staff in a school have to be able to have a say in the quality of leadership of the principal, of the associate superintendent and also of the superintendent. It has to be a seamless providing of information. For example, as superintendent, if I find out I am going into a community where 98 percent of the parents have confidence in my leadership and then I go into another school community where I

am at 48 percent confidence, what do you do about that? This is the same kind of thing. It is not a formal evaluation but you do have information and get feedback. Then you begin to do something to change those perceptions. I can give you examples of how the principals have been instrumental in not only deciding who school associate superintendents are, but it is also possible to have school principals have a say in which of the school associate superintendents they work with. That is interesting.

I did not include anything from the Technical Committee's recommendations on page 8 or 9 (Agenda Item V-B).

Chair Roberson:

I want to make a point to thank Senator Harris and the entire Technical Advisory Committee for all the hard work they put into this process. They have done a great job and will continue to meet and work with this Advisory Committee and Mr. Strembitsky. Can you walk us through the conceptual plan (Agenda Item V-C)?

Mr. Strembitsky:

There have been a number of changes in the writing of the plan but essentially the intent has not been altered since the original (Agenda Item V-D). It still proposes a different reorganization of the Clark County School District (CCSD), with schools becoming front and center as part of the District's operation. The timeline (Agenda Item V-E) is the same, with implementation proposed for the 2017-2018 school year. In terms of the Principalship, it was meant to be an all-inclusive at the school. There is a mindset in many places that the principal is responsible for the teaching staff and it ends there. Not true. The principal is also responsible for the students, parents and wider community, so it is a more inclusive concept.

Likewise at District level, the Superintendency and the superintendent is where the culture change comes. In most North American school organizations, what has happened is that the people who work with the superintendent tend to be the people in staff positions. These people are well-intended and provide a valuable service, but they also tend to grow in these positions that do not have responsibility to the customer, which are the parents; nor the product, which are the students. What happens when we look at student achievement and the people at the ground level working with students is that we sometimes hear "Who, me? I just work here." What this reorganization attempts to do is to more directly involve these people with the planning and the expenditure of available funds to achieve the desired results from their students.

For the culture to change, if the superintendent continues to work more directly with the people in staff departments who invariably are in the same building as that superintendent, do not be surprised if it is difficult to bring about that cultural change. In most large organizations, you cannot have all the principals at the table, but at least you can have the voice of the people working directly with the schools at the table. This was

why the recommendation is that the superintendent should work directly with the school associate superintendents. It is a crucial concept because if the superintendent, in consideration of changes in policy or practice, hears from people at the school, you will more likely get decisions that reflect the school position apart from other avenues of involving principals.

Part of that idea is embraced in the principles of organization, which have to be developed and tend to be one or two pages so you can get everyone on the same page (page 4, Agenda Item V-C). You would be surprised at how many places there are where the senior staff is not all on the same page. Under the principles of organization, people will have their say, but after everybody has had their say, a decision is made and people can still have a mind of their own, but they cannot have a will of their own. This is a crucial point.

As a superintendent, it is nice to be able to carry out the recommendations a school board approves which are ideas the superintendent initially recommended. The real test is when the school board passes the opposite of what the superintendent recommended. Then the superintendent and staff have two choices—to carry out what the board passed with the same commitment and fervor as if it was what the superintendent had recommended, or to vacate the position. You cannot have an in-between, and corporate sabotage is not acceptable. I am using pejorative language when I say that, but this is so crucial.

For example, within the Superintendency, everyone has their say and then after that, they are on the same page going forward. If you have 16 people, you cannot have 16 different directions; likewise at the school level. This is why we have listed that by January 1, these principles of organization are developed. These principles are being worked on at a superintendent level right now but once they are internalized, they will have to go to the others including the principals so they are involved in the discussion and can say what each one agrees with or expresses their difficulty with. Eventually, when push comes to shove, people have to buy into these because it will be the Clark County way of doing things.

Regarding staff cost for schools (page 6, Agenda Item V-C), as a consultant, I get to look at an issue and make a recommendation. I cannot be blind to the fact that there is not another point of view. I have come out strongly in favor of going with the average unit cost for teachers at schools. I have given my rationale and have also heard others talking about the actual costs. If this Committee chose to go with the actuals, people will have to look at how to implement that. The reason I recommended average cost is because of the fact that of the two alternatives, it is the lesser of the evils. Senator Ford talked about doing it in a modified way as a half measure, and that is a possibility. In large measure, you achieve the same thing by looking at a difference in the average unit cost of a full-time licensed teacher vis-à-vis the average unit cost of a substitute

teacher. That money would accrue to the school sites which presently have trouble with staffing, which works out to be a substantial amount of money.

Chair Roberson:

That concept is in the latest version of the regulations with markups (Agenda Item V-F) where there is a difference on the price charged to a school for a permanent, licensed teacher versus a substitute teacher. To the extent that a school cannot fill those vacancies with permanent, licensed teachers, they will keep the extra money gained from hiring a substitute teacher. That is a very different change from the status quo where now that money goes back to the central office and is spent elsewhere.

Mr. Strembitsky:

That is correct. The wording I would use is that the school will not be charged for staff they do not have; only for the staff they do have.

Senator Ford:

Just to clarify, the budget is based on teachers, not substitutes, so you are allocated monies based on the expectation you will hire a permanent, licensed teacher. If you cannot fill that vacancy and have to use a substitute teacher instead, you get to keep the difference between the two salaries. Is that correct?

Mr. Strembitsky:

Correct and the language I would use is that the money is allocated based on a weighted student funding formula based on students. The expenditures are based on the actual staff in the school. The difference at present is about \$55,000 per position.

The section in the proposed plan on parental and community engagement (page 8, Agenda Item V-C) recommends wide involvement and you will see in the regulations (Agenda Item V-F) that there are some expectations far beyond what presently exists in the District. Regarding the parental appeal process in that section, when people are entrusted with making decisions, it is possible that there will be disagreements. There have to be ways to resolve these disagreements and keep moving on, so that is why we included this.

The position taken on principal selection on the same page is that the school community, which includes parents and staff, should be involved in listing the kinds of things they think should be required in a principal coming to that school. It would be the responsibility of the superintendent to ensure that kind of leadership is provided in the school. If that leadership is not provided, it is the superintendent's responsibility to make the change. This is a two-way street. There is an involvement spelled out for the local community and there is another involvement spelled out for the legal responsibility of the superintendent.

Senator Ford:

To the issue of accountability, if a school committee decides to have younger staff because the teachers will be closer to the age of the students, that phraseology of “younger student” might run afoul of an age discrimination claim or a statute that does not allow the consideration of age in hiring. Then it would be up to the superintendent to say, “Thank you for the recommendation, but I cannot include the request to hire younger teachers because we think it runs afoul of discrimination statutes.” So that recommendation is only a recommendation, not a decision. Is that right?

Mr. Strembitsky:

Correct, and then the person gives his or her rationale for why they did not accept the recommendation. That is key because you do not rule by fiat; you rule by reason.

For the school year 2017-18 operational cycle, there is work that has to be done in the next 6 months which is crucial at the District level. Then, for the following 6 months, work must be done at the school level so the school year can begin. The operational cycle is therefore a 2-year period.

When I was asked about the transition costs, I used the word “considerable” in describing the costs. That word means “worthy of consideration, notable, important.” The reason I did not take a position on the transition costs initially is because so many of the costs are a redirection of what is presently being done. I did not know how much money there was in the budget for training, nor how much could be reallocated. I have been satisfied that for the recommendations and costs for the 2017-18 school year, it can be implemented. That is why I was mute on the cost initially and believed that at the appropriate time, the superintendent would speak to that issue. This is a work in progress. There is a lot more that has to be done, and that will be done, as we move in stages.

Chair Roberson:

In the current version of the plan (Agenda Item V-C) on page 9, it says that transition costs, “will be cost neutral as resources will be reallocated within CCSD.” So those costs will be borne internally?

Mr. Strembitsky:

That is right.

Assemblyman Stewart:

If a new principal position is open and the committee at the school recommends who that should be, then the superintendent suggests someone and they hire him or her, but it does not work out, how does that work? Is there any recourse for the staff?

Mr. Strembitsky:

It is incumbent on the superintendent to see that a different principal gets put in place and that there is effective leadership at every school. Therefore, if there is an individual who is not performing, or if a school community's circumstances are such that the principal-school pairing does not work out, it is up to the superintendent through the leadership to see that a new principal is selected to meet the requirements of that school.

Assemblyman Stewart:

In your experience, has that happened? Has the community been able to overrule the decision of the superintendent?

Mr. Strembitsky:

Given the culture that I am advocating, the superintendent would not wait to the point where there are delegations from the community or staff; the superintendent would take preemptive measures. This is not to say you do not work with the principal in question; people do not take a position because they want to fail. But if things are not working out, you have to see whether it is the individual or the circumstances and whether things can be changed on site or elsewhere.

My experience with an active management system is where the superintendent seeks to provide effective leadership at every school. When things are not working out, it is every bit as much in the interest of the superintendent as it is of the local staff to see that the situation is resolved. The direct answer to your question is that it is possible to do that and overrule the superintendent, working with people rather than being punitive. What happens in this system is that you share common values and goals. People want to succeed. My experience is that once this gets going, if principals are not succeeding, they try to change and if they are unsuccessful, they do not want to be there.

Senator Ford:

Regarding the transition costs and the requirement in the current plan that the costs will be incurred by reallocation within CCSD, looking at the timeline (Agenda Item V-E), you are expecting superintendent and assistant chiefs, to be trained by September 1, which is only 2 months from now, for District-wide implementation on autonomous schools for the 2017-18 school year. Then in 2 months and 2 weeks, you want the superintendent and central staff to be trained and in 7 months, by February 1, 2017, you want school associate superintendents and principals to be trained. Am I reading this timeline correctly?

Mr. Strembitsky:

The answer is yes, but when I say the training, I am talking about the initial steps of that training conceptually.

Senator Ford:

How much will it cost for this to take place within 2 months for the superintendent and assistant chiefs to do this initial training?

Chair Roberson:

The Superintendent of CCSD is on the agenda next and I think he could speak to that.

Mr. Strembitsky:

I was going to defer to the Superintendent and wait until he comes to the table to speak. This is my plan, and I will take ownership. On the other hand, it could not come forward without the involvement from people at the District level. I have involved Superintendent Skorkowsky and he has involved staff. Their cooperation has been nothing short of 100 percent, so that statement appearing on the timeline is only there because of previous conversations with him.

Senator Ford:

Reading between the lines, you believe this timeframe can be accommodated by the District from a financial standpoint?

Mr. Strembitsky:

That is correct.

Senator Ford:

Ok, we will wait to hear from the Superintendent on that to ensure that is the case. The second component is that there have been concerns about the capability and capacity of central to carry out this plan from a training perspective. That is, there have been questions as to whether current central administration staff has the ability to do effective training on the implementation of autonomous school models. To me, that indicates there may be the need for outside experts to be brought in to do the training. There is a confidence issue—which is not my word, but it is just from conversation—about whether central can do effective training on this new model. Have you had conversations about that? If so, have you considered that into the cost of training if training is not all done within the District?

Mr. Strembitsky:

I am confident that the required training in the initial stages can be handled within the District and that there are the competencies and expertise to achieve that. This is not to say that at some point we can opt to bring in people from the outside. As an example, within the National Football League (NFL) training camps, you can bring in guest artists, but once you start getting to the final cuts, then the people have to be able to internalize their own system. As this plan moves forward, first with the Superintendency, then to the principals, it rolls out in stages and they develop that expertise by being involved in the training and internalizing it.

The next thing is that they need to know that they will be responsible for passing the information on to the people that they work with. That is a different kind of training. While I am on the subject of training, one of the worst things that can happen in training is that it gets turned over to the training department. People attend those sessions—and I have sat through this type of session, including in Clark County—where the people in the audience should have been doing the training. There is an expertise available and we need to be able to utilize expertise that is presently on staff.

In many cases, people look at the roles people presently occupy and presume that their behavior will be identical in the change. This was the greatest surprise to me when I was involved in this kind of work. People would say, “This would work if you could replace a quarter of your principals.” I knew that could not happen. The one thing that was the biggest shock was that when you change the organizational structure and the rules, the behavior changed overnight. People rise to the occasion.

Senator Ford:

That is an interesting take on immediate changes in culture. You talk about culture and Assemblywoman Neal has talked about culture. It remains to be seen if what you just said can be accurate. One of my concerns is that we are issuing an unfunded mandate to the CCSD on a timeframe that is unreasonable if they do not have money. But if they tell us they have the money to do it; that is one thing. On the culture issue, if the lack of confidence in central administration is prevalent among principals and those who will be trained, will that hinder the ultimate implementation of this plan? That is, if I am being trained by nitwits, I therefore do not take the training seriously because I do not believe my trainers know what they are doing. That culture which is already embedded within the interactions precipitates ultimately a system that cannot work to its fullest potential. That is something I would like you to think on.

Mr. Strembitsky:

I will, and I would say to you that you are right on. There is no way somebody should go to the next level of training to train others and feel incapable or unbelieving of what he or she is training. This is a system that expects a high level of performance.

Assemblywoman Neal:

I understand that when you implement this system, ultimately everybody comes on board. It is like an organism that starts to evolve over time. How long do you think this evolution will take? Also, you mentioned the words “corporate sabotage” before. The thing I know to be true is that when people want power or a promotion, they tend to do exactly what is required to get it, regardless of whether or not they agree with the process. That can happen where the majority rules and the majority becomes who is being influenced by what they want at the end of the line. What kind of safeguard is there to keep that kind of corporate sabotage in check?

Mr. Strembitsky:

In the same way a principal wants to serve a community, the school associate superintendents have to want to serve the schools, asking the question, "What can I do today to deserve the respect of the people who are frontline? It goes all the way up to the superintendent. Once you buy in to those common values, it does happen.

How long does it take? When the National Basketball Association (NBA) swallowed the American Basketball Association (ABA), how many years did they cancel a season so they could adapt to a 3-point basket? They found out within 2 weeks that some people could take one step back and get a 50 percent bonus, 3 points rather than 2 points for a basket. Other people found that they could not do it before and could not do it now, but the NBA's regular season opened on time; they did not close. When it comes to transition, the biggest problem in the transition is that people will not believe it is going to happen, but once it hits that this is going to happen, the learning curve goes right up because reality sets in.

Assemblywoman Neal:

We need an organization where the people on the team believe that serving others above themselves is the priority. So the system itself will wean off selfish parasites who want to derail the system. I have hope and I respect what you are trying to do, but I am a politician, so I have seen selfish parasitic behavior override what others want for the greater good. **Mr. Strembitsky:**

Leadership is by serving; that is what leadership is all about. It is possible; it can happen and it will happen with the same people.

Chair Roberson:

Just so everyone understands, this Committee will continue to serve for the next 2 years, to oversee all of this. We are not done when we approve a plan, or a final plan, or when the State Board of Education approves the regulations. We are all going to be continuing to work on this together to make sure this works.

Mr. Strembitsky:

I have one comment about the "cost neutral to operate" statement, which I find difficult to explain. Here is what I have learned through experience: by using money more effectively, you can have money left over to do other things. When I use the words "cost effective," I do not want you as a Legislature to get the idea that you can therefore cut back on the money allotted to schools. My point is, if you did it in a way that was not working and now you do it in another way and it is working and you have some money left over to do other things, you should not be penalized by doing the right things. When I say "cost neutral," it does not cost more, but you will be able to do more things that should have been done in the first place. At the District level there is no incentive, nor indeed, knowledge, about how to make the expenditure in detail at the school level. But once those things are at the school level, they can find ways to use money more productively. That is where the expression cost neutral comes from.

Senator Ford:

That reminds me of the public comment we heard from the service employees union and the concern they raised about transportation. When can we expect to see the cost neutrality kick in? Because I do not see how immediately we will realize that. If, for example, in the transportation department, the concept is to privatize it or cut back something, it will have ripple effects on other things in other areas. That employee union is concerned because it potentially puts some of their employees out of work. How do you view this plan affecting those types of service areas? Where will the cost neutrality come from?

Mr. Strembitsky:

In the first stages, the major recommendation is that all staff working in a school will be part of a school plan, school budget, and the allocations made for that. Additionally, there have already been certain parts of equipment, supplies and services that are included. When we come to major issues like transportation, there will not be a capability in the first transition year to address other approaches. Eventually, we can make a plan to handle those kinds of things. That will happen as a natural outgrowth of a school saying, "We should have this part, but there has to be a capability to handle it."

Senator Ford:

At some point, we will have to consider what it means if transportation is cut back or otherwise affected, or food services, etc.

Mr. Strembitsky:

Just as the plan envisions, for results for which the schools are held responsible, they should have that money and be able to plan for it in the same way as results that are deemed to be held centrally. They, likewise, should be allocated that money and be able to plan that. It is relatively simple if you take an area such as, say, negotiations or payroll at the district level. I have worked in a district where somebody decided that if the schools want the decision making, fine, we will give them the payroll. All you need is one retroactive salary increase or a change in taxation and you know what you have done to a school. There is no sense putting things like that to the school level.

The difficulty is that there are a number of services which are budgeted centrally, but they are designed to be received at the school level. One I encountered yesterday was with respect to the English Language Learner (ELL) program. There are certain things in ELL that are at the District level, but some of that staff is also providing service at the school level. There are places where it is possible that part of a program could be at central and part at the school. Each of those should be done in a planned way where there is time to develop that with proper procedures

Senator Ford:

I get it. That is helpful.

Chair Roberson:

Ms. Erdoes, our Committee Counsel, will walk us through the draft regulations soon. I think the question you have on whether or not this plan can be fiscally neutral is reflected in the draft regulations (Agenda Item V-F), where it says 85 percent of the operational budget has to be at school level. You cannot meet the same level of bureaucracy and still meet that 85 percent criteria. The schools can purchase services and goods from the central administration, but it has to be at the cost of the central administration. I do not think we will accomplish our goal if we simply say, "Yes we are going to give more autonomy and budget authority to the schools, but we are not taking a hard line on the percentage of the budget that can be spent at central versus what has to be spent at the school site. We have that in the regulations, which, at the end of the day, will address the concerns on the cost of this.

I will now have Ms. Erdoes discuss the draft proposed regulations which are intended to carry out the plan. These regulations will ultimately have to be adopted by the State Board of Education. However, they will help guide the discussion and may be presented to the Clark County Board of County Commissioners so they are included in the hearings held by the Commissioners.

Brenda Erdoes (Legislative Counsel, Legal Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau):

You should have both a clean copy (Agenda Item V-A) and a marked-up copy of the draft regulations (Agenda Item V-F). I will be going through the marked-up copy, which will make clear the additions that have been put in place since Monday.

Assembly Bill (A.B.) 394 provides for the State Board of Education to adopt regulations that are "necessary and appropriate to carry out the plan developed by this Advisory Committee."

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

The bill further provides that the plan must not be carried out until the regulations are adopted. To facilitate this process, we have prepared the draft regulations intended to help this Advisory Committee go forward with this step. It will then be provided to the State Board of Education with the explanation and the rest of the materials from the Committee.

Although the plan presented by Mr. Strembitsky calls for converting each school within the District into an autonomous school, similar to the empowerment school model, these schools are different than empowerment schools. For that reason, the statutes governing empowerment schools will not apply to the schools in the Clark County

School District (CCSD) operating under this new model. That is the manner in which these new regulations will work with the statutes.

Referring to the marked-up draft regulations (Agenda Item V-F), section 2 through section 9 provide definitions for the rest of the regulations. More definitions can be added to these sections.

Section 10 makes each school within CCSD—except for charter schools and university schools for profoundly gifted pupils—a local school precinct, each operating under the site-based decision making model. This means the decisions that affect that local school precinct will be made at that school level.

Section 11 requires that the superintendent transfer responsibilities to each local school precinct in accordance with the plan. That plan of operation is adopted by the school precinct and developed pursuant to section 17 of this regulation.

Section 11, subsection 2 specifies that the responsibilities that must be transferred to every local school precinct include all the things listed there (page 2, Agenda Item V-F). That list has not changed from the original draft regulations—the selection of staff for the schools including teachers, administrators other than the principal, other staff, the purchase of equipment, services and supplies for the school, and developing a budget for the school for the use of the allocation of money from the school district. It also includes any other responsibilities designated by the superintendent.

Section 11, subsection 3 provides that the school district remain responsible for negotiations of salaries, benefits and other conditions of employment of administrators, teachers and other staff. This is essentially collective bargaining, so the District itself will remain responsible for that.

Section 11, subsection 4 states that on or before January 1 of each year, the superintendent can add additional responsibilities not listed in that group.

Section 12 (page 2, Agenda Item V-F) requires the superintendent to establish and make public the average cost for each type of employee employed by a local school precinct, including without limitation, a separate average unit cost for teachers and substitute teachers. It also requires the superintendent to establish and make public a list of equipment, services and supplies that a local school precinct may obtain from the school district using the allocation to the local school precinct and the cost for such equipment, services and supplies. It provides that the cost must not exceed the actual cost to the school district to provide the equipment, services and supplies to the local school precincts.

Section 12, subsection 2 specifies that a local school precinct is not required to purchase equipment, services and supplies for the school district. It sets it out to ensure that the requirements here match the plan. Section 12, subsection 3 specifies that each local school precinct must be allowed to carry forward in its budget any unexpended amount from its allocation to the next school year.

Section 13 (page 3, Agenda Item V-F) provides that on or before January 1 of each year, the superintendent shall establish for the next school year the things that make the budgeting work. This includes the percentage of the total per pupil funding to be received by the school district from all sources and the total of that amount which are unrestricted funds, and the percentage of the amount determined pursuant to subsection 1 to be unrestricted funds that will be allocated to the precincts which must equal not less than 85 percent of the total unrestricted funds received by the school district from all sources.

The paragraph also includes the superintendent establishing the anticipated amount of categorical funding to be received by the school district and whether such funding is restricted in a manner that prohibits the school district from including that categorical funding in the amount of per pupil funding allocated to the local school precincts. It also includes the total anticipated amount that will be allocated to each school precinct as determined pursuant to section 14 of this regulation and the responsibilities for local school precincts which will remain with central services as well as the responsibilities that will be carried out by the local school precincts. The superintendent will be required to make public the information established pursuant to this on the Internet website of the school district.

Section 14 (page 3, Agenda Item V-F) provides that the amount allocated to a local school precinct must be determined on a per pupil basis and must apply a weighted funding formula in the manner described in subsection 2 of this section, assigning a greater amount of funding for each pupil that belongs to certain designated categories as determined by the school district including: pupils who live in a household with a household income that is less than the federally designated level signifying poverty, based on the most recent data compiled by the Bureau of the Census of the United States Department of Commerce; pupils who are limited English proficient, and pupils with disabilities.

Section 14, subsection 2 of the draft regulations (page 4, Agenda Item V-F) provides how the weighted funding formula will work. Subsection 4 of section 14 requires the superintendent to inform each local school precinct of the anticipated amount that will be allocated to the local school precinct based upon the number of pupils who attend the school after applying the weighted funding formula.

Section 15 provides that the Superintendent shall assign a school associate superintendent to oversee each school precinct. Each school associate superintendent must not be assigned to oversee more than 25 local school precincts.

Section 15, subsection 2 states some of the duties of the associate superintendent, including to provide training to and supervise the principal the school, to review and approve the plan of operation for the local school precinct that is submitted pursuant to section 17 of this regulation, and assist the principal of the school in making any necessary revisions to the plan. Section 15, subsection 3 provides that the associate superintendent must be held accountable for all aspects of the performance of the local school precinct.

Section 16 (page 5, Agenda Item V-F), authorizes the acceptance of gifts, grants and donations from any sources by the Board of Trustees for the support of schools and the school district in carrying out the provisions of this regulation.

Section 17, provides the duties of the principal which includes establishing an organizational team for the local school precinct consisting of the members described in section 19 of this regulation on or before October 1 of each school year, developing the plan of operation for the local school precinct for the next school year with the assistance and advice of the organizational team, hiring staff for the local school precinct, and submitting the plan of operation for the local school precinct to the school associate superintendent or to the school for approval.

Section 17, subsection 2 provides requirements for the plan of operation for the local school precinct. It must include the budget for using the allocation to the local school precinct which itemizes the manner in which the precinct will use the money and any plan to improve the achievement of pupils enrolled in the school that is required to be prepared for the school pursuant to *Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 385A.650*.

Section 17, subsection 3 (page 6, Agenda Item V-F) provides that the budget must be based upon the average unit cost for each type of employee of the local school precinct established and the actual cost for the purchase of equipment, services and supplies for the local school precinct and the actual cost of any other item included in the budget of the local school precinct. Subsection 4 and subsection 5 of section 17 provide the timing for all those things to happen.

Section 18 (page 6, Agenda Item V-F) specifies the procedure to appeal any part of the plan. These sections are largely unchanged. Section 19 specifies the membership of the organizational team. Section 20 (page 7, Agenda Item V-F) provides the details for the organizational team, while Section 21 provides the duties of that organizational team. Section 22 (page 8, Agenda Item V-F) provides for the presentation of the plan to the superintendent and ultimately for the posting of the plan on the Internet.

Section 23 (page 8, Agenda Item V-F) requires surveys to be administered to all persons involved with each local school precinct to measure their satisfaction with the local school precinct. Section 24 requires a report of the survey results.

Section 25 is new (page 9, Agenda Item V-F) and provides that any cost incurred by Clark County School District to carry out the provisions of this regulation must be paid for through the redistribution of existing funds of the school district or through savings realized from the reorganization described in the regulation.

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

As I read this, any organization can donate to any school or have a foundation that is in charge of trying to get more money to a given school according to section 16 of the regulations. On the people who are in on the meeting with the principal, whether he or she votes or not, are those discussions subject to the open meeting law?

Ms. Erdoes:

Yes.

Assemblywoman Olivia Diaz (Assembly District No. 11, Vice Chair):

Mr. Strembitsky, I think you have done a phenomenal job balancing the powers. I know it is very difficult to structure when you are going from a top-down organization and then empowering principals and their teams at the site levels. If we keep the right focus, we will all come together and it will get better and better. I appreciate all your hard work thinking about things. In section 14, subsection 1, it talks about the weighted funding formula. The categories listed are poverty, English Language Learners (ELL) and pupils with disabilities. I did not see a reference to the gifted and talented population. Is there a reason they were left out?

Mr. Strembitsky:

My experience is that normally there are allocations for the gifted and talented.

Assemblywoman Diaz:

If possible, that is one recommendation I would make; to add them. In section 15, subsection 3, hopefully the intention is not punitive where it says the "school associate superintendent must be held accountable for all aspects of the performance of the local school precinct." Learning from our experience with No Child Left Behind, making a system punitive in nature yields no benefits for the students or staff. If we learn from that program, we know we should be focusing more on collaboration, support, mentoring and supporting each other to improve a system over time. I hope this is meant for the assistant superintendent to be coaching and mentoring the principals in the buildings. What does performance mean in there? It is fiduciary, academic or the whole school? What does that mean and how do you measure it?

Mr. Strembitsky:

The intent there is that just as the superintendent is responsible for the performance of all schools in a school district, the school associate superintendent is equally responsible for the entire number of schools that he or she works with. That emphasis is not punitive, but it assigns the responsibility to work with those people and be held accountable for the results, just as much as the principal at a school.

Assemblywoman Diaz:

Our evaluations as educators have a fixed amount of test data associated with them. You have to show that your pupils are growing over time based on the standardized test. So that is where my mindset is—what does performance mean for a school? How do we attach 25 of those schools to one individual? That is another of my concerns. The ratio of the associate superintendents overseeing 25 schools and principals seems like a big number. If those associate superintendents are supposed to be helping the principals crafting the plan and being there to answer questions and help think through the process, we should ask if that ratio is realistic for quality support. My fear is that a more experienced principal would get less attention and time over someone who is new to being a principal. Everyone will need an equal amount of support with this new plan because it is so new. Can you give me an idea of how performance will be measured and what is make or break for those associate superintendents?

Mr. Strembitsky:

The District will have to develop the measures. I have indicated eight areas where there need to be measures. When you get the measures, you have to be careful to adopt a limited number of them that will give you 90 percent of the picture instead of getting bogged down. The eight measures being focused on include student performance, attitude, and satisfaction; staff performance attitudes, parent and community attitudes, and looking after the physical assets and finances of the school district. With respect to what used to be called the span of control for supervision—I prefer to call it the span of effectiveness—we run into a fine line of having too few people making it ineffective or too many people where you can run into criticism of making a bureaucracy.

The other issue is that these associate superintendents run a fine line between working with schools and helping them, but they are not supposed to micromanage the school. Experience has shown that a number of 25 schools in a proper setting, plus or minus, is effective. My own experience with a number of school jurisdictions where they operated smaller schools is that once you get over 30 schools, you run into problems. I believe 25 is doable.

Assemblywoman Diaz:

In Section 17, subsection 2, paragraphs (a) and (b) (page 5, Agenda Item V-F) I think the priority should be shifted to be student centered first. Instead of starting with the

budget, the plan should be to improve the achievement of pupils because I think the money the school gets should be concentrated on student instruction in that building, ensuring that those children are getting the resources to make that happen. From the order we are stating it here, it seems like we are saying the budget has priority but that should not be first. I would like the priority to be that we first want to see an instructional plan developed and then see how we will support it with available funds.

Mr. Strembitsky:

I agree. For me, the budget is a fiscal translation of a plan, so the plan comes first and then you dollarize your plan. I concur.

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

In section 10 it touches on charter schools and university schools for profoundly gifted students, but we have several magnet schools in CCSD. I am concerned that if you push down certain admittance policies, because right now they are open to the entire District, how can we ensure they do not get blocked off from any students in the District?

Mr. Strembitsky:

There is no intent to block or interfere with that operation in any way. The discussions I have had with both the people who drafted these regulations is that those schools would not be negatively affected.

Assemblyman Silberkraus:

Good to have that on the record because when you give somebody free rein to change policy at the school level, something like that could come up. Also, we spoke of student involvement at the last meeting. In section 19, I would like to see something that would allow for a student member on these committees. They could be without a vote or just advisory, but at the middle school and high school level, you can get valuable input from students.

Mr. Strembitsky:

It is not a requirement here, and the only thing I would say is that if there was to be a student, it should not be restricted to the high schools. I feel strongly about this. I have seen elementary students very much involved.

Assemblyman Silberkraus:

I agree 100 percent. Also, one of the big players are the community groups in areas like Moapa Valley, City of Henderson, North Las Vegas, Las Vegas and all parts of Clark County. I would like to see some opportunity for the entire community have a voice. You said earlier that with all we are doing, it could become cumbersome or challenging to integrate, but it would be a loss to not have their voices, especially since they have been a driving force behind this from the beginning.

Senator Ford:

Are the attendance zones still within the school district's prerogative to establish?

Ms. Erdoes:

Yes.

Senator Ford:

I heard Ms. Erdoes say that the current statutes governing empowerment schools will not apply to these autonomous schools. Is that right?

Ms. Erdoes:

Yes, we have differentiated these schools enough factually from the empowerment schools, so that is our interpretation of the law. Those statutes will not apply. If you want some of those statutes to apply, we can add them to the regulation. This regulation is intended to stand alone.

Chair Roberson:

Can you explain the rationale for that?

Ms. Erdoes:

Basically, the plan and the descriptions of those schools in statute is very specific. It describes the same empowerment schools that the pilot project was carried out with. It was designed to apply to only those specific types of schools. These schools have substantive differences in enough different places that we feel the statutes should be interpreted to apply only to the empowerment schools still at the 5 percent required in statute. This applies to all the different counties, but this type of school that is going to be going into CCSD, if this is implemented, are different enough from empowerment schools that statutes would not apply.

Senator Ford:

I do not understand the full implications of what you just indicated. Does this mean there is there no statutory oversight for these regulations? Do they take on status tantamount to a statutory authorization?

Ms. Erdoes:

The manner in which A.B. 394 specifies this should work is that the Advisory Committee is given the authority to work out the plan. Based on the plan the Committee adopts, the State Board of Education is empowered to adopt the regulations to carry out the plan and those regulations, like all regulations adopted pursuant to NRS 233B, the Nevada Administrative Procedure Act, have the force and effect of law. There are various other programs carried out under regulations, not just the schools.

Senator Ford:

Speaking of the State Board of Education, did you say they may adopt these regulations or that they must adopt them? Or might they look at them as a recommendation and develop their own?

Ms. Erdoes:

They shall adopt regulations, but it is in within their power as another elected body to determine what those regulations will be. In our talks with the department that works with the State Board of Education, my understanding is that they are very pleased to get the recommendations from this Advisory Committee and look at those. From a specific statutory point of view, they are not limited or required to adopt exactly what you present.

Senator Ford:

So these are essentially recommendations?

Ms. Erdoes:

Yes.

Senator Ford:

In section 16 regarding the acceptance of gifts, I do not read that as allowing gifts to local school precincts. I read that as the Board of Trustees being able to accept gifts. Am I misreading that?

Ms. Erdoes:

No you are not misreading that. I think the gifts and grants provisions that we put in always causes this kind of problem because all schools already have the authority to accept gifts, grants and other donations. I think this is meant to be an authorization for the Board of Trustees itself to also seek donations, in addition to what the schools already do now.

Senator Ford:

Elsewhere in our statutes, even though they may not be referred to as local school precincts in Clark County, the local precincts are authorized to accept gifts themselves.

Ms. Erdoes:

Not specifically authorized, but they do have the general power to do those things and they are doing it now.

Senator Ford:

On performance, I know we have performance frameworks elsewhere in statute, but might it be prudent to reference performance as the definition used elsewhere in statute for consistency?

Ms. Erdoes:

I cannot answer what is prudent, but I can tell you it is certainly possible and we can either find one of those describing what you are looking for or come up with an additional one working with Mr. Strembitsky.

Senator Ford:

It is not defined in the definitions in this regulation and I agree with Assemblywoman Diaz that the word performance can be considered vague enough that it could encompass stuff we are not contemplating. We should probably look at utilizing the phraseology we use elsewhere in our statutes to define what we are talking about.

Finally, is there a timeframe we have contemplated for approval of the plan of operation that the local school precinct is required to submit to the associate superintendent?

Ms. Erdoes:

I do not think there is a timeframe specified in this regulation. Mr. Strembitsky might have that on his timeline, but that is different than having something in regulation saying something must be done specifically by when. They do have to complete some tasks by October 1, but I do not know if they have to have that plan in place. That may be because the plan can be appealed at several steps which might make it difficult.

Senator Ford:

OK, then in your opinion, we do not need to specify a time? You do not think it could cause concern if someone was tarrying and not responding like it is necessary?

Mr. Strembitsky:

There is a timeline (Agenda Item V-E). The intention is to permit schools 6 weeks of planning time once they get their allocations. That is more time than usually given, but we felt that in a transition year if we could telescope some of the things at the central level, we would give the schools the 6 weeks. The plans have to be approved because there are other things in terms of the collective agreements as to when staffing starts, etc. So there is in fact a timeline that has to be followed for approvals.

Senator Ford:

Ms. Erdoes, you do not think it has to be put into the regulation itself?

Ms. Erdoes:

I think you need balance. When you look at something like this, you need to balance the fact that if you put a hard and fast timeline in here, it might cause a real problem depending on how this gets implemented. It is just not that specific yet. Maybe it is something you might add later, but that is the balance.

Senator Ford:

Okay, thank you. I will save my last question for Superintendent Skorkowsky.

Senator Denis:

In section 14, subsection 2 of the draft regulations where it addresses the weighted funding formula, the way I read it is that they are going to use whatever the State Department of Education has come up with on weighted funding. Is that your understanding also?

Ms. Erdoes:

Yes, that is what we were trying to convey there. That weighted funding formula has been established by the Legislature and it has been ongoing. Section 14, subsection 2 simply goes on to say, "If no such weights have been established or if the School District wishes to apply a different weight to any category, the School District must submit its formula or a request to use a different weight to the State Department of Education for approval."

Senator Denis:

My question was on the second sentence where it says that if no such weights have been established or if the school district wishes to apply a different weight. In the first sentence it says the District "shall" apply the weights established by the State Department of Education but in the second sentence it sounds like they can decide to do something different. That is why I was confused because it sounds like the District can decide to do something different and then apply for that change.

Ms. Erdoes:

I think that what we are trying to convey there is that they shall use that weighted funding formula unless they get an exception from the State Department of Education.

Senator Denis:

So does that mean they can apply for an exception?

Ms. Erdoes:

Yes.

Senator Denis:

Okay. Also, in section 19, subsection 1, paragraph (d) (page 7, Agenda Item V-F) where it talks about the parents on a school's organizational team, can we make it so it is parents or legal guardians of children who attend the school but that are not employees of the school? One thing we have seen with parental involvement in the past is that they appoint another teacher who happens to have a child going to the school. I think there is a conflict there. Could we do that?

Ms. Erdoes:

Yes, legally we can include that additional exception.

Senator Denis:

In that same paragraph where it says, "The association of parents for the school shall establish a process for nominating and electing those members," if a school has a PTA, then the PTA would nominate the person?

Ms. Erdoes:

Yes, and if they had an association of parents other than a PTA, they would also do that.

Senator Denis:

What if they do not have a parent association? Would they need to establish one to be able to nominate a parent representative?

Senator Hardy:

Could the Community Education Advisory Board (CEAB) do that? In Clark County there is a provision for a CEAB made up of parents, teachers, community members, principals and vice principals. Not every school has one, but it could be a place for that kind of discussion and recommendation to be made.

Assemblywoman Diaz:

Mr. Strembitsky, have you seen schools where there is not a parent group? What is the process to ensure parents can be included at a school? Many of our community members are intimidated by something like a board, so the appetite to participate might not be there, but this is their school and you want them to participate in making it better. Is there another way other school districts do this?

Mr. Strembitsky:

Because of situations you might find in some of your schools, you might want to have an escape clause. I believe it is fair to expect that there be a community group and an outreach to solicit that kind of a group if one does not exist at a school. We cannot say we are for parent involvement and then absolve the obligation if there is not a group already established. I think there would have to be extenuating circumstances where

that goal could not be met. My own experience is that if we truly mean what we say, we can reach out and get representation.

Senator Denis:

I agree and hope that especially if we are going to go autonomous, every school would have some type of organization for parent involvement. I understand the issues we have with some of our parents but part of the training needs to go to help parents become involved.

Chair Roberson:

Point well taken. Maybe that is something we flag for now and as we are refining it and going through the public hearing process, we will get more dialogue and we can all think more about it and make sure the language is right by the time we get to the final plan.

Assemblyman Stewart:

I want to follow up on Assemblyman Silberkraus's suggestion that under Section 19, subsection 1, (page 7, Agenda Item V-F) we add paragraph (e) for student involvement and I recommend making them voting members. Would there be a legal problem to have students voting?

Ms. Erdoes:

No, I do not believe there would be a legal problem with that. You would just need to figure out how those students would be selected.

Assemblyman Stewart:

If we have them, and I hope we do, I think it is important for them to have a real vote and not just throw them a bone.

Assemblywoman Neal:

In section 24, (page 9, Agenda Item V-F), it says the State Department of Education can change the regulations once we sent it up for approval? They do not necessarily have to take this language as is?

Ms. Erdoes:

Yes, that is what the bill provides; that the State Board of Education is responsible for adopting the regulation. I might add that the procedure for adopting regulations includes that those regulations must come before Legislative Commission to be approved before they become final law. This is a procedure that kind of bounces back and forth between the Legislature and the State Board of Education.

Assemblywoman Neal:

But since it is not an empowerment system and is instead autonomous, which means we are creating a new school structure, how does this work legally and jurisdictionally?

Technically, we are not amending or adding new regulations under empowerment. It is almost like the achievement school district we did through statutory authority, right? Would there be a different jurisdictional travel? That is what I am confused about.

Ms. Erdoes:

Our legal opinion is that there would not be, because there are different ways the Legislature creates these same types of bodies. One way is to put in specifically in statute exactly what you are creating. Another is to give one board or another the authority to adopt regulations. Chapter 233B of *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) provides that those regulations, if properly adopted through the process, have the force and effect of law, so in a sense, those are equal to statutes. That is what would put this type of school on the same footing with schools that are specifically provided for in statute.

Assemblywoman Neal:

In section 24, subsection 2, paragraph (c) (page 9, Agenda Item V-F) on who the Board of Trustees shall submit the report to, I was comparing the language in the bill we passed out. I know it says the “director of Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB),” but should it instead say for transmittal to the Legislature? I think there should be a delineation, because I have seen things in prior experience get sent as a report to the LCB that is not necessarily on our table as a Legislature. We have to go ask for it. It is something that gets lost in the process. I have seen it happen. What is the difference between the language there and the existing language in A.B. 394, section 28.5, where it is more specific in terms of the transmittal? Clarity needs to be there.

Ms. Erdoes:

We are happy to add that language back in to match the bill. I have to say, I shorthanded that because what I know is that the director of the LCB has a process now to accept all these reports and then they send out a notice of what is in there that you can access.

Chair Roberson:

Regarding the issue of the regulations, it is my understanding that the LCB has been working closely with State Board of Education during this entire process, so there should be no surprises by the time these regulations are approved in final form by this Committee and sent to the State Board of Education. It is also my understanding that they have been very cooperative.

Assemblywoman Diaz:

Is it true that the CCSD will not be forced to use the weighted funding formula (WFF) until they receive that WFF? We have been approving the funding in these last few sessions categorically, and now with the language about WFF, we do not really expect

them to use the categorical funding to carry out the WFF, correct? Are they separate? Can one not be put in place until they receive the actual funding?

Ms. Erdoes:

I think legally what you are saying is correct, but I would refer you to Julie Waller.

Julie Waller (Senior Program Analyst, Fiscal Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau):

With respect to the categorical funding, there are restrictions, so it would not be a part of the per pupil funding. It would be an add-on to the per pupil funding for those student populations and for use as dictated by the Legislature in approving that funding. The District does include in their budget some of their general fund for these student populations. That portion they already have budgeted could be developed into a weight and added on to the per pupil funding that would be required to be developed prior to the State's WFF being developed.

Senator Ford:

In section 14, subsection 3 (page 4, Agenda Item V-F) it says, "Upon receipt of a formula or request pursuant to subsection 3, the Department of Education must review the formula or request and inform the School District whether it approves within 30 days." I think you mean subsection 2, not subsection 3. Further to Assemblywoman Diaz's question, it seems to me that the District is required to develop its own—by the way, I think it is weighted funding allocation as opposed to formula under these circumstances since the District uses different terminology—but I read this as the District being required to develop a weighted funding allocation. Even if the State Department of Education has not developed one, the District has to submit its allocation formula to the State Board of Education for approval. Or, if there is one out there and they want to change it, then, like Senator Denis said, they can request a change. But if there is not a funding formula associated with a particular category developed by the State Department of Education, the District still has to create one. That is how I read this section. Is that correct?

Ms. Erdoes:

Yes, that is exactly correct.

Senator Ford:

I just want to be sure the District understands its obligation.

Chair Roberson:

It is my understanding that in October, the State Department of Education will recommend a weighted funding formula.

Senator Harris:

To clarify, I do not know if people are clear that when we refer to the State Department of Education in the bill, we are referring to the State Department of Education as opposed to the federal one.

Chair Roberson:

I will now open Agenda Item V, a report by the Superintendent of the CCSD concerning implementation of the proposed plan.

Mr. Skorkowsky:

If we can start with the regulations first, I have some clarifications I would like to get from you and from the Legislative Counsel Bureau representative to make sure I understand everything.

One of the questions I would ask is if there is concern about the State Board of Education taking the recommendations and putting those into *Nevada Administrative Code* (NAC). I would suggest that if they were going to change anything, they come back to this group and present that prior to making any changes. That way, because they have not been engaged in the process as a group, I want to ensure they understand all the difficulty that we have gone through the last several months to get to that point. I think that is important.

Chair Roberson:

I understand. Brenda Erdoes probably should respond to this specifically.

Ms. Erdoes:

The bill, A.B 394, is very specific in order to be able to make that delegation by the Legislature to the State Board of Education so it does not have to come back for any language changes. We can certainly make that offer to them and do it in that way, but I do not believe legally you can make that requirement.

Mr. Skorkowsky:

My suggestion was that if they were going to change anything, they should come back to this Advisory Committee.

Chair Roberson:

I will say that whatever regulations are approved by the State Board of Education will then have to go to the Legislative Commission which, coincidentally, I also chair. The Legislative Commission would then have to approve those regulations.

Mr. Skorkowsky:

One of the other things that literally made my hair stand on end a few minutes ago was when Senator Hardy asked about the requirements for the open meeting law. I want this

group to understand the implications of that. If we're talking about a 6- week time period when schools are going to get their budgets and have to complete a plan, every meeting would have to be posted according to open meeting law. We have 357 schools that would then have to post according to the open meeting law. That brings up a great red flag over me, probably the size of this building, because it is going to be a difficult thing to be sure that we are monitoring all 357 schools to make sure they are complying with the open meeting law. That is another training aspect we did not consider—that every school team now will have to be trained on open meeting law and their compliance with that.

Ms. Erdoes:

I could be put in the position of saying no, but honestly, there is no exception made by the open meeting law for this type of group because they are going to be essentially, if not spending money, they will be making recommendations for the expenditure of public money. We can look at that again, but those bodies do fall under the open meeting law so the 3-day notice would be required as well as the requirement to provide for a recording or minutes of those meetings.

Mr. Skorkowsky:

In section 10, I agree with Assemblyman Silberkraus that the language is not specific enough. I think we do need to outline that the District retains all zoning magnet school pieces. Otherwise, we will come under concerns with the federal Office for Civil Rights on pieces that we have already put in place. I think that section 10 needs to be very specific when it comes to that so we can protect all the work we have done and that it does not come into question or vulnerable to any lawsuits.

Chair Roberson:

That is a good point. I am sure that everyone on this Committee agrees we need to incorporate that.

Mr. Skorkowsky:

I want to point out some of the concerns in section 11, subsection 2 which is the selection of staff. We are very willing as a District to sit down with our bargaining groups to look at what changes would need to be put into place to get through some of those issues. We have an obligation to protect our employees and I think both of us are behind that.

In section 12, subsection 1, paragraph (a), when it talks about the separate average unit for teachers and substitute teachers, one of the things we will have to work on is a clever principal who decides to hire all substitutes to get more money and not have licensed teachers within their classroom. We are going to need to be potentially a little more specific in that subsection to say that the goal is to fill every position with a

licensed teacher, with the understanding that substitutes may need to be made. I think that is an important designation.

In section 12, subsection 2 it talks about the local school precinct not being required to purchase equipment, services or supplies from the District. I was just curious if this supersedes NRS purchasing guidelines that we are required to follow as a public entity?

Ms. Erdoes:

Can you elaborate just a little bit because I believe the school precinct that made the purchase would still have to comply with those statutory guidelines. This is simply made to say that the school is not required to purchase from central services. It is not meant to say that they do not have to comply. I do not believe it says that they do not have to comply with any statutory requirements on purchases by schools.

Mr. Skorkowsky:

When we are buying bulk items, we have to go to a Request for Purchase (RFP) process, so we get the quote for the District. If a school were to go outside of that RFP process, we may run into some purchasing issues.

Ms. Erdoes:

I think legally you would be required to work those out under here.

Mr. Skorkowsky:

I am just curious about the wording because our principals will interpret this that they can go and buy as they choose, so maybe the wording needs to be shifted a little bit.

Senator Ford:

I want to be certain that I understand what just transpired here. Local school precincts, will they be required to undergo RFP's when they want to purchase stuff outside of the school district?

Ms. Erdoes:

There is no exemption for them from the provisions that require those. I cannot speak to whether an RFP is required, but I think that normally in those type of statutory requirements it is based on the total amount you are spending, so they have to comply with those. If what they are purchasing comes up to the standard of those things that you have to do, then they would have to do that. In other words, there is no exemption for these schools from the statutory requirements for purchasing for local governments.

Senator Ford:

Are the schools already purchasing things outside of the school district?

Mr. Skorkowsky:

There are some purchases that are made as long as they comply with the guidelines, but when we are talking about having additional funds and schools decide that they want to make a large purchase that may go across those guidelines and those numbers, we will then have to work and make sure. I am just trying to understand.

Senator Ford:

A more direct question then—do schools individually already have knowledge on the RFP requirements and/or laws related to purchasing things outside of certain limits?

Mr. Skorkowsky:

Yes, to a certain extent they do.

In Section 14, subsection 4 (page 4, Agenda Item V-F) one of the pieces that is of concern is using the quarterly reports to determine the allocations for students. So if we are looking at previous calendar quarter pursuant to NRS 387.1223, we are in the process of building six new schools for the 2017 year, six new schools for the 2018 year and six new schools for the 2019 year. There would be no way to predict that information because we would not have quarterly reports on the zoning pieces. So that may need to be looked at because we are looking at backing up our zoning process to comply with the January 1 date. It will be difficult and we will not be able to establish a budget in that capacity.

Chair Roberson:

Looking at this, what section are you referring to where you think maybe we need to make some clarification?

Mr. Skorkowsky:

Section 14, subsection 4. If you look at the second from the bottom line, it says, “attending each school for the previous calendar quarter.” Again, we will not have any data because there will be no school to get data for.

Senator Harris:

It becomes a bigger challenge to when you have mid-school year openings, because you are not going to even have close to the data you will need as you are projecting out for that entire next school year. We do not want our new schools that start mid-year to be short-changed on funds, staff and all those other things that are so critical to the success of a school.

Chair Roberson:

We will definitely make sure that is clarified before the final report.

Mr. Skorkowsky:

I wanted to remark on Assemblywoman Diaz's question about the supervision piece and the supervision process that Senator Ford then jumped on. *Nevada Revised Statutes* has given authority to the Teachers and Leaders Counsel to establish the Nevada Educator Performance Framework. One of the pieces they are adding in that may need to be subsequently changed based on this process, is for principal supervisors. We may need to look at what standards they are putting in place for that issue. If we have to change those standards, we may have to go to the Teachers and Leaders Counsel and say, "Okay, under what we are working on with Assembly Bill 394, this will not fit for our principal supervisors." There is a process to go through that. I just wanted to make you aware there are specific processes put in place through the Teachers and Leaders Counsel that the State Board of Education has adopted that we would have to comply with.

Senator Hardy:

Going back to section 14, subsection 4 (page 4, Agenda Item V-F), probably the biggest problem in the new school is that in the old school where the students are coming from, the budget is going to go down.

Mr. Skorkowsky:

You are exactly right. That is why if we used our Attendance Zoned Advisory Council that establishes those projections for each of those attendance zones for the next school year, it may alleviate that issue because the budget would then decrease in those schools that were being rezoned for the new school openings. Those were the things I wanted to get clarified so I understood.

Chair Roberson:

Those are important points. We will make sure that we incorporate them to the extent that we can.

Mr. Skorkowsky:

When it comes to training for district-wide implementation, I would agree with some of my colleagues that we can use both our assistant chiefs and building principals who are currently in those roles. It is going to have to be a team approach to provide the training necessary. It may be an opportunity—when we are doing teacher trainings to teach teachers how to be active members of this plan—that we engage with Clark County Education Association (CCEA) to look at potential training aspects across the board. That was one of the next steps that I wanted to ask about at the end, but I just want to make the point that this is important.

When it comes to the accountability piece, I know there are concerns about the powers, the triad as it was referred to, with the superintendent. One of the important pieces of the plan is that the principal is ultimately held accountable for his or her school data, the

school associate superintendent is then accountable for those 25 schools and then the superintendent is ultimately accountable for the District. One of the pieces we would lack accountability for is that if a team decided they were going down a path and student achievement continued to decrease, there is no authority to remove that team. So it is important to find that system of checks and balances and it is going to be important to have that authority to be able to say, "Based on the data you are showing us, you cannot justify that this is the right path, so let us sit down and talk about how we might be able to adapt or modify this plan."

One of the pieces I think is most important is that we understand there are going to be separate phases of training through this entire process. The initial training is going to be very important. We have a mechanism to train our building principals, either through principal level meetings or performance zone meetings, where we have them as a captive audience to provide that training this fall. That way, we can ensure that by January 1, 2017, they are fully trained in the areas of strategic based budgeting as well as in the climate and culture of collaboration. We have to make sure every school has that culture and climate of collaboration training to make sure the site-based decision teams are going to be successful.

I have had conversations with Mr. Vellardita of CCEA and our teachers about using our new contracts professional growth plans for teachers and offering instruction to teachers. Again, those could be done jointly so we are establishing training programs this fall for teachers to be engaged in the process. When it comes to support staff, we have within our new calendar year this year 3 unassigned days for schools for the teachers and the students. These are on the 3 days before Thanksgiving in late November. That was part of our site-based collaboration time plan that was approved by the State Department of Education; work days for administrators and support staff unless they choose to take those days off. On the first 2 days, we could provide extensive training to support staff to engage them in the process so that anybody who is interested in being on one of those site teams can attend the training and understand the site-base decision making process, including what is going to be in place for putting the budget and the plan together as well as how to work collaboratively with the other entities within their building.

We have also looked at our University of Family Learning through FACES, our Family and Community Engagement Services Department to provide training to parents so we can get them ready for the process. Then we also can do extensive central office training, especially since I do have them at my beck and call, fortunately. For this first round of training, that will be important.

One of the things we did not account for was any outside experts that may need to come in to help guide us through that process. We have the capability to get the first stage of the training off the ground, but we may need that outside training essential to

changing the climate and culture, questioning decisions and asking the right questions and being engaged. That may come at a later date.

The biggest challenge will be trying to understand some of the ways we can shift money. One of the other big challenges is the transparency piece with our current human capital management system. It is a Full Time Equivalent (FTE) system that cannot be reprogrammed into a dollar system. The program is 25 years old and it just will not happen. So one of the concerns that comes up is how do we make sure that the transparency is provided. We would have to literally hand produce every school to make sure that it is appropriate, because we do not have the transition of those dollars from FTEs into actual dollar amount.

One of the other pieces that we are trying to look at is how we would shift funds. The Read by Grade Three Initiative assessment is coming to mind. It is approximately \$12.50 per student, which averages about \$15,000 to \$23,000 per elementary school to implement that program. We have a year to work through these processes, but with decentralizing the funds, there are then no centralized funds to pay for big ticket items like this. We would then have to, based on my understanding, turn around and charge the school that fee to be able to pay for the assessment. Those are types of things I want the Committee to understand—when the funds get decentralized, there will be no large buckets of money for any of those major purchases.

Also, as the categoricals come down, the State changes the budget because that is a competitive grant process. We will have to figure out how those costs get passed on to the schools to say, “We are giving you this money, but we are going to have to take back a certain amount to be able to cover the assessment system that is required by the State.” As we go forward, it will change all of our behaviors—Legislators and the State Board of Education alike—on how we put forward some of these massive changes.

Senator Ford:

Do you need any extra money to implement the timeline, meeting the deadlines as they come up?

Mr. Skorkowsky:

Good question. I think that we can make the training aspects work and that is an important piece, although I do not know exactly what that will entail on our budget and finance side as well as our human resources side. It will be human capital time that will have to be spent, because our system will not handle this type of a shift from the FTE exposure to the dollar exposure that will be needed for transparency. We can work with this, though. We have done this with as many as 181 schools this past year, so we can make the transition to the strategic budgeting.

Now, to talk about the quality of how this will be that first year; it will be a test and as Mr. Strembitsky said earlier, it gets better each year as you go along. So, can we make it happen? Yes. Will it take some extra time and people hours internally? Yes. We are going to have to create these systems by hand, something we have not been able to do District-wide at this point.

Senator Ford:

That was a long answer. I just need to know, is that a no?

Mr. Skorkowsky:

It is not a no; it is a "Hopefully so." That is my intent. The answer is yes to the training aspect, but there are things that may have to go by the wayside that other people are doing. We may have to shift people to different jobs and responsibilities to make some of these things work by the timeline specified.

Senator Ford:

You indicated something about needing experts, which is money that you had not accounted for. When do you anticipate the need for that new money to arise?

Mr. Skorkowsky:

I think it would be after the first of the year. When you look at the timeline that set forward, from my understanding, the school budgets need to be finalized by March 1, 2017. That meets the contractual guidelines we have for teacher transfer season, so it makes sure everything gets put in place. If we wanted to be innovative this first year, it would need to take place in that timeframe between January and March.

If we wanted to just get off the ground, then it would take place after that March 1, 2017 date to bring in experts. When you're talking about 357 schools and their teams, it is not just a matter of putting everyone in the Thomas and Mack, because I do not even know if that would hold everybody and their teams. So we are going to have to be very creative. Given the opportunity, we can provide multiple locations and an audience for each of these items, but it may take some extended time periods with a trainer in place.

Senator Ford:

I'm not trying to be dense, but I am just not getting it. I need to understand when you are going to need new money. Is it going to be before I go back to Session in February of 2017?

Mr. Skorkowsky:

No. It would be after that time.

Senator Ford:

So we, as a Legislature, could listen to you then when you say, “I need you to bring me \$20 million more because I don’t have enough to implement the rest of this plan.”

Mr. Skorkowsky:

That is correct.

Assemblywoman Neal:

You said you are going to have to shift and do some adjustments. Where are you going to take money from to put it somewhere else?

Mr. Skorkowsky:

We are going through a process right now. Mr. Strembitsky has put us into a fact-finding process with our budgets, preparing us for zero-based budgeting which is an extremely important process to decentralization. He gave us several tasks to gather information on what each department or division is responsible for and how much of each budget goes where, and within that, what is the timeliness and response to how things are done.

The second piece we are in the process of this August through November is to look at central office almost like a billable process, where we are having people accounting for their time so we can understand if they are supporting schools or doing central office work. That way, we can determine how much of a zero-based budget we can actually go down to. We will not go down to completely flat because there are certain central service guaranteed levels of service we will have to provide. The rolling out of those areas may cause some extensive work and will likely take us a year or 2 to complete.

We need to have large conversations with our principals to determine truly what they and their teams actually want control of. We want to ascertain what they would like to have central services purchase and what they would like to have just money for. We survey our principals in the spring, and this past spring principals were split pretty much down the board as to where they wanted certain things and where they did not want certain things. There was not a lot in the middle; it was the ends—some wanted full control of full dollars to be able to go and do what they wanted and others did not want to be bothered with any of this. So we are trying to go back to the principals and say, “Here is what we see as a guaranteed level of service for your school to ensure we are meeting all state and federal guidelines, district policy, and complying with every aspect of the law; and here are things where we have lots of flexibilities that we can then choose to offer you.”

Assemblywoman Neal:

What areas do you think are going to need this longer time period? Have you and Mr. Strembitsky discussed the fact that there are schools which are much older that have different needs because they are 50 years old and they still have not been

remodeled? That extends to the conversation you brought up earlier which is the second part, the purchasing discussion. Are we talking about Chapter 333 of NRS? How do you fit under it and how would they transition under it?

Mr. Skorkowsky:

That is a very valid question. I went to some of our big businesses in town to get some guidance on this. I went to MGM, Caesar's Palace and Harrah's to ask, "How do you do this?" The process they use is that for any of those goods and services, they use a large RFP process for the specific services. In the case of maintenance and things like that, obviously they would have to use licensed contractors and they would have to comply with the State's prevailing wage law. We would have to write that into the RFP and then have these companies develop a price range, which is what these large corporations have done. They have an acceptable range that the services must fall within. Then the individual properties are able to negotiate with those companies if they so choose. I do not know if we want to go that far and I am not sure what our principals feel comfortable with, so we have to be really careful. I have not had enough time with Mr. Strembitsky on this subject since we have been focused on other things. There are several next steps after this meeting that we need to take to meet compliance with the guidelines that are set forth in the timeline.

Assemblywoman Neal:

Did you answer the first part? I think it was the areas that are going to take more than a year.

Mr. Skorkowsky:

I think that when you look at any type of maintenance or operational cost, you have to take time into account. We do have to take into account the age of our buildings because even in a new school we are going to have some things that are still under warranty. As the newer schools go through the process, things would not need to be paid for, so the extent of their monies for maintenance may not be as high. We would have to figure out all of that centrally to make sure it is a fair and equitable across the entire valley. We have a lot of schools that are in some of our poorest, poverty zip codes that are some of our oldest schools. We are going to have to think about those pieces as we do that and make sure we are being equitable in the process. That is another giant big puzzle yet to be opened.

I would just like to say, in response to a lot of the concerns that came out, if this goes forward today and we move on to the public input, you made it very clear that this is not the final plan, but at that point in time, the District has been very cautious to just give information. At this point in time, we would need to take a more active role in developing some of these things and working closely with our associations and our work groups to make sure we are building some of the right things.

Specifically, looking at the principal interview process. What is a consistent principal interview process so that we can validate the input from these site-based teams? What will the roles and responsibilities of the school associate superintendent be? Maybe some current assistant chiefs and community members can potentially help us develop that as we go forward with developing this plan. The vetting process for the principles of organization is something we need to start on immediately so we can make sure everybody understands the plan as we go forward. A lot of the work for these site-based teams will depend upon some of the basic work pieces that will have to be in place in the fall so that we can implement them by January 1, 2017.

Senator Harris:

I would like to encourage you to create a panel or a pool of mentor principals. You have some amazing principals who are going to take this model and run with it. We might have some other principals who need additional training or are a little apprehensive. If you have a panel of experts who can help them get to the next level, they can embrace the culture and further develop to where they can succeed. If we get that in the works now, it will help improve successes and we will have one more layer of resource available.

Assemblywoman Diaz:

As we have been going through this entire process, I have not lost sight of the fact that we can generally undertake different plans to improve as a District. I know that one of them was recently advanced, the ELL master plan and it has been a work in progress for years. We have finally gotten to a point where we have an amazing plan put together and many people reading it from outside Nevada are lauding the work that went into it. But the real work begins now as we are actually going to transition into the plan and bring it to life. How do you make sure this new plan of creating autonomous schools does not debunk or derail the implementation of the ELL master plan? How are you going to make sure that they are both given their due value and worth? The leaders of the schools must be involved in order to make those changes.

Mr. Skorkowsky:

I will give you my personal thoughts and how this works. At the same time that you were as a group hiring Mr. Strembitsky, we were in the final phases of vetting our English Language Learners (ELL) master plan which is a phenomenal plan. The challenge immediately became that this is a top-down plan in a system that is now moving towards an autonomous, site-based model. I immediately started challenging my leadership to ask, "How do you shift this way of thinking into making it a choice for certain services but a guaranteed level of services for all to ensure compliance?"

The first challenge that we had was identifying the first 84 schools to be included in cohort 1. With the way that the plan went out, the first cohort was going to include all middle schools because they had the largest concentration of long-term learners.

I immediately started asking questions of the team. I think that is going to be one of the ways we are able to start thinking through these pieces, not only at the central level, but at the school level. So I started questioning to say, "Okay, how can schools opt into this and how can they have a choice in this?"

Eventually, every school is going to be held accountable for those assessment scores from testing our second language students. They are held accountable on the school performance framework and on the annual measure objectives. We will be monitoring each one of those schools. The first group opted into this. I will tell you we had a lot of middle schools that opted in because they know that is where their most important subgroup population is. And to improve student achievement, they have to address their ELL population, and specifically the long-term learners.

We did have other high population elementary schools that chose to be a part of this that were not necessarily Zoom Schools yet, so they had that opportunity to participate in that first round of professional development. As we go forward with any initiatives at the State or local level, we are going to have to build in a menu of options for the schools to be able to choose from and select. We were able to shift our Read by Grade Three Initiative plan in literally 24 hours to start. It was still a top-down approach because we did not have time, we only had 24 hours to literally get things shifted. Our principals then had to come together and make options so we could submit that by the deadline set forth by the State Department of Education.

We are having to shift gears to say that schools need to have a menu of options, but regardless of what menu you choose you are held accountable for the results. If you make that decision not to engage in certain aspects of the ELL master plan, you are still held accountable for those results. If you are not getting the results through your own methodology, then we step in and start guiding them as we go forward through the supervisory process of coaching and mentoring to say here is your data, here is what you are missing. We point out that they did not get to success through their current plan, and we ask, "What are your mid-course corrections?" This is important because they now have to get to the next level, but they have less in which to make that growth. That changes the conversation drastically.

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

By and large, what is in the regulations that are being proposed, taking into context the feedback that has been provided by Committee members and others, we think this is a work in progress that should be moved forward. There has been a lot of discussion around a calendar and I just want to remind the Committee that the calendar is dictated by this Legislation. It is not necessarily dictated by the school district or the ability to do things. This Legislation is very clear in terms of when this should be done, when it should be implemented, etc. So given that, I think that there is a degree of urgency in terms of moving this forward because every day that you move forward that progress is

not made is a day you do not get back. At some point, that window collapses, and as it collapses, it makes it much more difficult to carry out any effective implementation.

I think the resource issue is ultimately what is going to be very evident in terms of making decisions. We have had a very robust process where policy has been discussed and often times, policy will intersect resource because resource will ultimately determine the type of policy that can be implemented. So I think it is very appropriate at this time because unless we do what I am about to suggest, we will not have some of the answers that you as a Committee have been raising today. Unless we start digging down and defining very clearly what is central services and what's the appropriate budget for central services then we're not going to begin to unpack that huge \$2 billion plus budget and get a sense of what kind of resources are available for these schools and what kind of conversion process will be at play and what will be the cost of that.

For example, we think it is very clear there are certain services like transportation, food, utilities, security, building maintenance and things of that sort that you can put a number on right now or close to it. I do not think we should go any further without the District working with Mr. Strembitsky to make clear what kind of money we are talking about. When we start thinking about that, we start talking about the conversion from central administration to a service model. When you do that, you start to see where there is additional money and then you can start thinking about how you repurpose that money. I am not about to suggest that I am an expert on the CCSD's budget, but we have been forced to look at this budget and I am not convinced that there is a lack of resources for the conversion from a top-down central administration to a new site-based education delivery system in Clark County.

We said there were five key things that had to be addressed if we really want a game changer and to really affect, in a different way, student outcome. Some of these things have been incorporated into Mr. Strembitsky's plan as well as in some of the regulations that are before you. I want to be real clear in terms of where we are coming from. The first key thing is school based autonomy. When we talk about school based autonomy, what is critical is to associate as much resources as possible so that there truly is autonomy. Those who control the purse, control the outcome. We made a proposal that 85 percent of all non-restricted General Fund money should go right into those schools and no more than 15 percent should go to central services. If that is not an appropriate figure, then let that be the figure to argue against. We think that is critical; the game changer in this system.

The next critical thing is a weighted student funding formula within the current District resources, taking into account current categorical funding, knowing that they will sunset at the end of the second year of the biennium. The second part to this is a recommendation we think this Committee can make, especially given the fact that there will be oversight for 2 years—to accelerate the implementation of last Session's

Senate Bill (S.B.) 508 which is the weighted student funding formula and to have a conversation with the State Department of Education.

SENATE BILL 508: Revises provisions governing the Nevada Plan. (BDR 34-1184)

What would that cost if you moved that year of implementation up 1 year because that is the year of implementation of this plan?

The third critical thing is to determine what central service becomes. What are those services? You can have all the fuzzy wuzzy discussions about culture and how you change mindsets and what kind of climate you create in a building, but if you do not institutionalize the type of training we need to make that change in culture with leaders, starting with administrators, and put in the appropriate resources then you are not going to accomplish the objective we are talking about.

The fourth critical thing, which we think has been captured in this to some extent, is the site-based team. What is it? Who makes it up? One of the things we advocated for beyond the teachers, support staff and administrators was for parents and students. We think Assemblyman Silberkraus was right on to add that; to not just be on that team but to have a voice. We also suggest that there should be a little bit more discussion about the decision making process. We totally agree that ultimately somebody has to be held accountable and rightfully so the burden of a lot of that is the principal. But the principal's success is only enhanced to the extent that they share decision making around student outcomes, so that was a key piece of our proposal on the site-based team.

Finally, I really want to drill down on this fifth point because as a member of the Technical Advisory Committee to this Committee, there was a significant effort to get parental input and engagement. A significant portion of parents in these at-risk buildings, well over 200 of these buildings, were not represented in that conversation. Not because there was no effort to reach out but because the nature of their livelihoods and socio-economic status, where they are working maybe one or two jobs, have daycare issues or are working evenings which prevents them from becoming engaged. As Assemblyperson Diaz has suggested, there is also a cultural challenge in terms of being inclusive. So we propose that there has to be a different type of parental engagement. We looked at what happened in Chicago where there was a significant breakthrough to get minority parents, particularly in a lower socio-economic areas, to be involved. We suggested giving a building the discretion to pay a stipend to a parent if who has to miss work or pay daycare top participate. There is money in that budget; there is \$7 million alone in the current District budget around the FACES program.

We think that the draft regulations (Agenda Item V-F) addressed a lot of our five suggested issues, starting with the 85 percent. At this point, it is really about trying to

move this process forward and I think the most significant thing that this Committee should be asking for is the money. If we convert from central administration to central services, you can at least get a handle what the cost of central services is. In that context, you can get a sense of the balance of money that would be available.

Senator Hardy:

Regarding the 85 percent, the way the thing is going to work, the principal is going to have to ask to buy something from central services under contract or whatever. So does that money that the person asks for from central service count as the 85 percent or the 15 percent?

Mr. Vellardita:

I would defer to Mr. Strembitsky to give clarification on his recommendation. I can tell you that not a penny more of actual cost should be charged to that building, whether or not part of that cost is imbedded in the budget of central service. There should not be a cost that is kicked back to the building.

Senator Hardy:

On your weighted student formula, I represent rural schools in Clark County so I recognize that a copy machine costs the same in Logandale as it does in Las Vegas. I recognize that rural schools probably have some kind of a special need that the bigger school does not, especially without the bigger school purchasing power. Is that kind of how you look at that also?

Mr. Vellardita:

I do. There is a very unique need in the rurals and that has come out loud and clear in the Technical Advisory Committee. The rurals have needs and interests that are unique and distinct from an urban school district. Though I think these regulations as they are now and as they evolve can apply, I also know there is particular interest in these areas that we should address.

Ms. Erdoes:

To Senator Hardy's question regarding the 85 percent, the way the model is built and the regulation currently operates, that 85 percent is what will be allocated to the school. So in that sense, the money they choose to then purchase services from central services would be included in that 85 percent because it is their choice. They can buy that product or service there, or they can buy it somewhere else. My understanding, and the way the regulation is drafted, is that it is part of the 85 percent. If you want it different, I need to change the regulation.

Senator Ford:

You raise a very good point about central services. Have I missed it? We have not defined it?

Mr. Vellardita:

It is not specifically stated in the proposal, nor is it specifically stated in terms of what those services would be in the regulations. Unless that is addressed, you are not going to get a sense of the conversion from a central to a de-central model and then what the role is of the remaining administration to be converted to a service.

Chair Roberson:

Senator Ford, they are not in these draft regulations (Agenda Item V-F). I anticipate that we will want to have them in the final regulations. I want to thank Mr. Vellardita. We incorporated a number of items from the CCEA proposal that we have all seen in the proposal that was given to the Technical Advisory Committee. In that proposal, there is a delineation of services between central and what would be at the school level. We have not incorporated those into this draft, but I do think as we go through the public input process and the District works with the administrators' association, teachers' association and Mr. Strembitsky, it probably makes sense that the final plan would have some additional detail on that. Obviously that is for this Committee to decide but that is my viewpoint at this stage.

Senator Ford:

Did I understand you correctly then to say the final report from the Technical Advisory Committee has a proposal delineating what the breakdown should be?

Chair Roberson:

No, I am sorry; CCEA had made written recommendations and a good number of those recommendations have already been incorporated. The particular division of responsibility for services is not at this stage in this proposed plan.

Mr. Vellardita:

In closing, in response to a comment that Superintendent Skorkowsky has made, CCEA is committed to work with the school district as we always have been and we will continue to make this successful. We are committed to making sure great leaders are in the building, but great leaders need great training and great support systems. We also recognize that within our collective bargaining agreement, there needs to be some dialogue and changes with the school district to make this effective. We are willing and committed to kind of go there.

Finally, what I'd like to say is that I heard the principals earlier and I concur with a number of their comments and I can certainly concur with the fact that they need to be involved in this process. But the one thing I will say, and this has nothing to do with you as a Committee, is that the collective bargaining agreement for the principals and the collective bargaining agreement for the support staff is still not settled. You just need to know that it is still out there and we need to bring closure to it. You are talking about human capital moving this process forward, but until you bring closure on those items it

is going to be an issue and it is just going to be in the way of things. I am encouraging all sides, and if we can play a role to do so to kind of like make that happen, I encourage the CCSD Board of School Trustees to dig down and deep to try to bring closure so that we are now focused on reorganizing the school district. That's all I have.

Assemblywoman Neal:

What do you mean, it will get in the way this unfinished collective bargaining?

Mr. Vellardita:

If you recall, these hearings started out under a cloud and that cloud was two things. Every day kids went to school and 25,000 of them had a substitute teacher and they ended the school year that way. Also, 18,000 licensed professionals had gone without a contract for more than 6 months and were in negotiations in a dispute with the school. It does not help the climate or the relationships when those things are ongoing. Ours have settled and we have moved on. There are 40,000 employees with the CCSD; we only represent 18,000. The balance of those, short of those that are not represented, have no contract in place. You cannot expect people to embrace a change the way this Legislation is suggesting without having some sense of security of their employment, their working conditions, and bringing an end to a long standing dispute on contract for the support staff and a long standing dispute for the administration. You just cannot do it without it getting in the way.

Chair Roberson:

I would like the Committee to consider moving forward so that we can start the process the process of the six public meetings. Knowing full well this is not the final plan, we will all be continuing to work throughout the summer to refine this plan and these regulations. Because of the timeline dictated by A.B. 394, it is important that we move forward. I do think there is enough substance and meat in the plan and the regulations at this point where we are ready to have conversations with members of the public. My hope is that if we move forward today, we can be in a position to approve a final plan by the end of August.

If a motion is made to move forward, I would request that we include in the motion that the Committee would allow the Legal Division of LCB to make any revisions to the regulations which they deem necessary so long as they are consistent with what the Committee has discussed today and what is consistent with the plan as it has been presented. I want to specifically call out a number of items that I think everyone on the Committee agreed are pretty easy changes. These are issues that will come up in these public meetings anyway. It may make sense to make these changes now. If there is disagreement, please feel free to correct me and if I have missed something, please bring that to my attention.

Here are the amendments to the draft regulations (Agenda Item V-F): In section 14, include gifted and talented students in the weighted funding formula. Also in section 14,

fix the reference to subsection 2—it actually should be subsection 2, not subsection 3. In section 15, define performance. In section 17, subsection 1, reverse paragraph (a) and paragraph (b). In section 19, subsection 1, paragraph (d), make it clear that parents on these organizational teams cannot also be employees of the school. Also in that paragraph, include some language to account for the fact that not every school has a parent organization. In section 19, subsection 1, add paragraph (e) to include some sort of student involvement in the organizational team. It sounds like there is some interest in adding at least one student voting member on these organizational teams. In section 24, Assemblywoman Neal wanted to include that the final report will go to the Legislature not simply the Legislative Counsel Bureau Director. Also, change all references from the Department of Education to the State Department of Education.

There are other things certainly, many other things, that were raised today that we need to continue working on. I do not think it makes sense to try to address all of those today, but I think these aforementioned items are pretty simple to fix and it seemed there was unanimity on the Committee for making those changes.

Assemblywoman Neal:

In the definitions under section 1 through section 9, are we going to leave those for public comment? I think Assemblywoman Diaz brought up defining evaluation or performance. I do not know if we would be defining central agency in duties, or do you consider that an issue that is under contention?

Chair Roberson:

One of the items I listed was defining performance. The central service and delineating which services will stay with central and which ones will not is a longer conversation and we are going to have a lot of public input on that. I do not think that it really helps us or furthers us along in the process of getting to a final plan by trying to add something in there now. I think there needs to be a lot more conversation on that. That is my personal opinion.

Assemblywoman Neal:

Also under section 10 (page 1, Agenda Item V-F), it was mentioned to at least deal with the civil rights issue.

Chair Roberson:

Thank you, you are correct. I forgot that there are a number that Superintendent Skorkowsky mentioned and I want to add that. That is the one we need to clarify—that CCSD retains control over zoning and the magnet schools, which is in section 10.

In section 12, subsection 1, paragraph (a), the Superintendent wanted us to be clear and add some language to prioritize the schools striving to hire permanent teachers in

connection with the funding formula or the average salaries that are allocated for permanent teachers versus substitute teachers.

In section 14, subsection 4, the Superintendent asked that we clarify that new schools, will not have quarterly data from the previous quarter, so we should probably have some language in there to acknowledge that.

I think that was it.

Assemblywoman Neal:

Even though Ms. Erdoes cleared it up under section 12, I do think there at least needs to be some language—if he was referring to NRS 333 under State Purchasing—at least some clarity to the administrative staff who may buy things. Maybe it can be inserted through a statute insertion saying what they are still bound to review and go by.

Ms. Erdoes:

I can certainly try to work on that. The concern I have is that it becomes problematic in drafting the regulations or statutes to have an effective law when you start saying that something does apply when it already does apply and then you do not say that everywhere. I am a little bit concerned about that, but I can certainly try to come up with some other way to clarify it if you like.

Chair Roberson:

Senator Ford is shaking his head no. Maybe that is one of those things we can continue to refine over the next couple of months. We can keep that as something we will keep working on and not necessarily put it in this draft.

Assemblywoman Neal:

That is good. My final concern is something that was mentioned earlier about some kind of zoning clarification. I just wrote it down in terms of maybe something we should consider or be dealing with because there are zoning patterns that are already in place in terms of this local school precinct but I do not know where that fits into the conversation.

Ms. Erdoes:

I think that was one of the listed changes that Chair Roberson just talked about. I think it just was not stated that way, but we are going to take care of that.

ASSEMBLYMAN SILBERKRAUS MOVED TO ADOPT THE DRAFT REGULATIONS FOR PROPOSAL TO THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION BY THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO DEVELOP A PLAN TO REORGANIZE THE CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT WITH THE AFOREMENTIONED AMENDMENTS AND SEND THIS ON TO CONTINUE THE PROCESS.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DIAZ SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chair Roberson:

This is a process; it is not a final plan. We are going to hear from the Technical Advisory Committee today and I am very interested to hear their thoughts. For people in the room now who were not here before, one of the first things we did today was review all the Technical Advisory Committee recommendations and talk with Mr. Strembitsky about the incorporation of those. He discussed which of those recommendations have been incorporated into the proposed plan (Agenda Item V-C). Both Committees will still be working on this, but this discussion today at least enables us to start the process of having the six required public meetings that we need to have within Clark County. I would like to have those as soon as possible and at the same time, we will all be continuing to work on and refine this plan, adding substance and specificity to it. My hope and goal is that we are able to support a final plan by the end of this summer.

I will now open Agenda Item VI, public comment.

Guillermo Vazquez (Executive Director, Educational Support Employees Association):

My organization, the Educational Support Employees Association, represents 11,479 support professionals in the CCSD. Thank you for all the work you have done to compose this plan; it is a monumental task. As an association representing employees, if we can find a better way to deliver the best quality education to our students, we should all be working toward that endeavor. We want to be a party to it going forward.

There is one key point that impacts employees drastically, especially those who work from check to check. We have almost 6,000 employees living below a living wage standard within CCSD. Much of the information you have been sharing through our community over the last months has been difficult to disseminate to our membership but we are going to be doing the best we can to keep them plugged in.

There is one section in here that really raises a lot of questions about jobs—section 12, subsection 2 (page 2, Agenda Item V-F) mentions the school precincts' authority not to

be required to purchase services from the District. I will be reaching out to many of you to get more details on how that is going to play out. Obviously, custodians, food service workers, bus drivers, maintenance and other service personnel will be concerned about what this all means to them. We have seen outsourcing all over the country and as a national education association, we work with employers left and right to be competitive. There is nothing in the draft regulations that allows us to remain competitive in this process. Competitive bidding is a common practice with school districts around the country. We will compete with anybody who gives us a shot. If services can be allocated to vendors without a protocol, an RFP process, we have seen where things go awry, where family members are hired to perform services, etc. You can imagine how that can replicate itself in a system as big as CCSD. Keep that in mind. We do not want to create fiefdoms because we did not foresee doing the right thing.

One other point to consider is purchasing power. You alluded to that. If we were to allow a circumvention of the process, we will lose a lot of power on purchasing supplies and equipment. That saves money for our students.

Defining the central services component is going to be essential. We want to keep on providing testimony and input from our employees during the upcoming six public hearings. It is a great opportunity for you to hear their stories about the services they want to continue providing. I look forward to working with you in the future.

Sylvia Lazos (Vice Chair, Latino Leadership Council; Policy Director, Educate Nevada Now):

I want to commend this Committee on all your hard work. As a community, we are coming to a consensus with a common vision and theme. It may mean we are all on the right track, or that we are all crazy together. I come from a slightly different perspective of what has been mentioned before. There was a 188-page assessment report from the empowerment pilot that reported mixed results on empowerment. There were lessons learned and I recommend the consultant look at that report so we do not repeat mistakes. Dr. Ralph Reynolds, formerly at University of Nevada, Las Vegas and now at Northern Iowa University would be happy to speak to Mr. Strembitsky on that.

The zero-based budgeting and weighted school funding formula is probably, to me, the genius of this plan. I heard Assemblyman Silberkraus gasp and felt his pain when he heard about how we budget for substitutes in poor schools. That was my pain as well. We do have a process of rethinking the Nevada Plan, which is on its own over here. Somehow, we have to bring them together so this works. That is one of our major tasks, moving forward.

To the central services issue, civil rights are not an option; they are a mandate. You do not get to opt in on whether I am going to respect your civil rights or not. In that respect, I want to bring to your attention that we do have an English Language Learner (ELL)

master plan that will transform how we talk about ELL civil rights in the CCSD. It will finally lift our District from where we have been. It is essential for that master plan to work if we are not going to be in 50th place anymore. To me, that is an example of a centralized service so as we define what we are absolutely going to fund and mandate, that would be a key example for my part.

I am concerned that we focus about how to help the principals know what they do not know. Our principal training process must help our principals understand that they may not be as culturally adept as they think they are, especially with respect to special education or low income communities. They may purchase items they do not need. That has to be part of the training transition. I also agree with Mr. Vellardita that our poor communities have been AWOL in this process. Maybe going forward, we could hire a consultant to help us hear the voices from the 200 high needs schools.

Ms. Tampa:

As I sat here listening to this meeting, there were some fantastic questions and answers going back and forth. I did hear a couple of red flag issues, one of which was a mention of mass layoffs. I do not know what that means, but these Committee conversations are not accessible to the general public because they are during the day when most people work. I do not know what the plan is for those other community meetings, but I do hope there is better accessibility and good communication because the only reason I knew about this meeting was because I was seeking it out. My other concern is in Section 10 of the regulation (page 1, Agenda Item V-F), under the definition of a school precinct. If I am understanding it correctly, it says that every school is a precinct. Is that correct?

Chair Roberson:

That is correct.

Ms. Tampa:

Is that 357 precincts? Then there are 25 associate superintendents overseeing it, and each precinct can negotiate its own staffing and services?

Chair Roberson:

Public comment is probably not the time to have the dialogue, but that is not exactly the case. Collective bargaining agreements will not be affected by this and will still be handled at the central office. And, I did not hear anything about mass layoffs today.

Ms. Tampa:

I am glad to hear that; I am glad to be wrong about those kinds of things.

Chair Roberson:

I am glad you are here and interested in being a part of this. We are going to have a lot more dialogue through public meetings, so I encourage you to be here as much as you can. If you cannot be here, you can watch via videoconference.

Anna Slighting:

I am the parent of four CCSD children and a CCSD employee. Thank you for keeping zoning centralized. My concern today is about excluding the parents who are employees of a school site to be a member on their school team. At our school, the parent group president is a school employee. She grew up in the community and is widely known in the community. She is the principal's right hand woman in communicating with families. I would love to see her have the possibility of having a seat on one of the school site teams. My principal is one who exemplifies the school culture and climate of including all families. He is doing what we want all principals to do. By excluding parents who work at that site, we are doing an injustice. If there is undue influence that a principal has, then that parent will have the process to appeal because that is the attitude we want to eliminate in principals. Every parent should have the chance.

Chair Roberson:

Before I close public comment, I received a letter from Jill Hohman to be submitted in public comment for this meeting (Agenda Item VI). I will now adjourn the meeting of this Advisory Committee at 2:17 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Linda Hiller, Interim Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Michael Roberson, Chair

Date: _____

Exhibit/ Agenda Item	Witness / Agency	Description
A		Agenda
B		Attendance Roster
Agenda Item II-A	Lisa Mayo-DeRiso	Written Testimony
Agenda Item II-B	Autumn Tampa	Written Testimony
Agenda Item II-C	Caryne Shea	Written Testimony
Agenda Item V-A	Michael Strembitsky	Draft Regulations for the Proposal to the State Board of Education by the Advisory Committee to Develop a Plan to Reorganize the Clark County School District
Agenda Item V-B	Michael Strembitsky	Final Report of the Findings of the Technical Advisory Committee to Develop a Plan to Reorganize the Clark County School District
Agenda Item V-C	Michael Strembitsky	The Plan to Reorganize the Clark County School District (with markups)
Agenda Item V-D	Michael Strembitsky	The Plan to Reorganize the Clark County School District
Agenda Item V-E	Michael Strembitsky	Implementation Timeline
Agenda Item V-F	Michael Strembitsky	Draft Regulations for the Proposal to the State Board of Education by the Advisory Committee to

		Develop a Plan to Reorganize the Clark County School District (with markups)
Agenda Item VI	Jill Hohman	Submitted Letter

DRAFT