

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Craddock  
Vice Chairman Foley  
Mr. Beyer  
Mr. Coulter  
Mrs. Hayes  
Mr. Horn  
Mr. Malone  
Mr. Rackley  
Mr. Vergiels

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

GUESTS PRESENT: Glen Butterfield, Clark County School District  
Carroll Johnston, Clark County School District  
Terry Mannion, Clark County School District  
Lucille Lusk, Clark County School Board  
James Lyman, Clark County School Board  
John Hawkins, Nevada State School Boards Assn  
Doug Byington, Nevada Assn of School Admin.  
Ned Solomon, Clark County Juvenile Authority

Chairman Craddock called the meeting to order at 3:08 p.m.

SCR 3 Directs Nevada state library and department of education to study possibilities of joint or shared use of facilities, staffs or other resources of school and public libraries.

Chairman Craddock asked Mr. Beyer to present the amendment he had proposed at our last committee meeting. It is as follows: page 1, line 16, delete "study the possibilities of" and insert "develop, where possible,". Page 1, delete line 20 and insert: "RESOLVED, That this development include ways of". Delete lines 22 through 25. Amend the title of the resolution on the second line by deleting: "study the possibilities of" and inserting "develop".

Mr. Beyer moved adoption of the amendment, seconded by Mr. Malone, unanimously carried.

Mr. Beyer moved DO PASS AS AMENDED for SCR 3, seconded by Mr. Malone, unanimously carried.

AB 387 Relaxes treatment of truancy in public schools.

Chairman Craddock noted that this bill essentially has to do with the Clark County School District attendance policy. At this point Mr. Craddock turned the gavel over to Vice Chairman Foley so that he could present his own testimony for AB 387, attached as EXHIBIT A.

Vice Chairman Foley asked Mr. Craddock who had recommended he withdraw and re-enroll his son after their trip to New York. Mr. Craddock replied that he had spoken to a current and a former Clark County School Board member.

Mr. Craddock then returned to being Chairman of the meeting.

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Testifying against AB 387 was Glen Butterfield, Teacher at Las Vegas High School, who has been with Clark County for 28 years, 27 at Las Vegas High School.

At this point, the written presentation from the Clark County School District entitled, "First Semester Attendance Report," was distributed to the committee and is attached as EXHIBIT B.

Mr. Butterfield stated that last year the English Department at his high school was reorganized to concentrate on the competency tests. He taught two English classes. At the end of the first nine weeks, he noted that 43.9% of his students had failed. He stated that after checking into this problem, he found that out of this 45-day period, the "F" students had an average of 18.6 days absent. He stated that if we're going to help the student to meet their educational needs, somewhere along the way we have to have an attendance policy of this sort. He stated they want to establish with the students, so that they can have success, regular habits of being in the classroom, being on time, and having the necessary equipment.

When asked about the attendance figures for the other students, Mr. Butterfield replied that the "A's" had 1.7, "B's" 4.2, "C's" 2.4, and the "D's" 2.2 average days absent over the nine-week period. He stated that this proves that if the students are there, the teachers are capable of teaching the subject.

Mr. Butterfield referred to page 13 of EXHIBIT B where 120 senior high school teachers were asked if "In your opinion, do the teachers endorse the new attendance policy?" and 98% answered, "Yes."

Mr. Craddock asked about Mr. Butterfield's statement that the English classes only taught the competency areas. Mr. Butterfield replied that this was taught in particular but was only one of the goals of the class.

Testifying next, against AB 387, was Mr. Carroll Johnston, who has been with the Clark County School District for the past twenty years in various capacities; as a high school classroom teacher, athletic coach, dean of students, counselor, junior high school vice principal and principal, and the past eight years, Principal of Clark High School, and just recently, Principal at Chapparral High School.

He stated that he did not want AB 387 to be passed. He stated the present attendance policy has had a significant positive influence in the school district. The policy demands that students and parents share with the school responsibility and importance of regular and continued student attendance. He continued that he felt that in the years past, the district has not been fair to students by tolerating a laissez-faire attitude about classroom attendance. The present policy on attendance, he continued, makes it very clear exactly what is expected of students.

Mr. Johnston said in his opinion, most parents and students endorse this policy. District studies show that the administrators support it at about the 98 percent level and encourage its continued enforcement. He stated that the sad part of the policy is that

students will be excluded by not meeting the standards of the policy. However, most of these students dropped out of school anyway or were not in attendance but were carried on the rolls with an extreme number of absences. Mr. Johnston continued that achievement test scores have improved significantly district-wide the past school year. He attributes a great deal of this to the attendance policy.

Mr. Johnston continued that the policy has significantly decreased the partial absences or class cuts. If this bill is passed, he indicated that the partial absences or class cuts would again surface as a major problem. He said the bottom line is that students must be in class to learn, and this policy has helped students to that end. He asked that the plan be allowed to run this one trial year and that any changes or revisions be handled in their community involving their parents, students, staff and their board of trustees.

Mr. Vergiels and Mr. Johnston discussed why students Mr. Vergiels has brought to Carson City to help him have not had any trouble with unexcused absences. It was determined that they were 7th or 8th graders, and this policy is currently only covering 9th through 12th graders.

Mr. Horn asked how many unexcused absences a student could have before being excluded. Mr. Johnston replied that they were allowed six a semester. Mr. Horn asked what determines whether the absences are excused or unexcused. Mr. Johnston replied that they go by the reasons for absence presented by the parents or guardians and then follow the district attendance guidelines for determining whether the absence is excused or unexcused. Mr. Horn asked if the teacher or the principal played a role in determining exclusions. Mr. Johnston replied that they interpreted the excuses presented by parents. Mr. Horn asked if Mr. Johnston felt the attendance policy was working. Mr. Johnston replied that he felt it was very successful, certainly with some problems, but successful. Mr. Horn asked what he attributed this success to. Mr. Johnston stated that the casual absence or class cuts were a major problem and this area has been helped the most. He further stated that most of the exclusions have not been for seven absences, but for 18 or 19 a semester.

Mr. Horn asked what kinds of problems he had indicated earlier. Mr. Johnston replied they were of implementation, i.e., variations in interpretation and getting back into a strict attendance mode by the students, the school staff and the community.

Mr. Horn asked what an excused absence was. Mr. Johnston read the regulation: "An excused absence as defined by this regulation shall include an absence caused by illness or medical appointments, a death in the family, a mandated court appearance, approved religious holidays, or any emergency outside the control of the student or the student's family, such as are subject to the approval of the principal."

Mr. Horn asked how many incidences were handled each semester. Mr. Johnston replied, speaking for himself, 100 had been excluded

from Clark High School. Mr. Horn asked how many of the 100 would have dropped out anyway; Mr. Johnston replied at least 60. He noted about 65-70% re-enrolled the next semester, as well as many enrolling at the Sunset High School the second nine-week period.

Mr. Vergiels asked if petty theft had decreased in Clark County due to this attendance policy. Mr. Johnston said he did not have any figures on this. Mr. Ned Solomon, Clark County Juvenile Authority, answered from the audience that he did not have the figures either. However, Mr. Solomon continued, if they are excluded from school, they are available on the street without need to be in school.

Mr. Johnston took exception to this stating that these same students were out of class already before, they were just carried on the rolls with many absences.

Chairman Craddock said he had gone to the Metropolitan Police Department, not asking about before and after the attendance policy, but asking about during school time versus vacation time. They indicated that there was basically no difference in juvenile associated crimes.

Vice Chairman Foley asked if a girl was upset about her boyfriend just before second period and therefore misses part of that period, if she would be marked absent for the whole day under this policy. Mr. Johnston replied that this was true. Ms. Foley asked why this girl then would continue on with the rest of the day's classes if she was already marked absent. Mr. Johnston replied that he hoped all students would not make these kinds of decisions but would rather still attend classes in order to keep their grades up. Ms. Foley asked if there was a time limit of what part of a period they could miss. Mr. Johnston replied that if a student does arrive for a period, they do mark him present, unless he misses the whole period. Mr. Johnston also stated that he felt this was too lenient.

Mr. Malone, being a member of the Metropolitan Police Department, stated he could not see any pick-up in crime figures either.

Mr. Johnston said regardless of the figures, more students were now attending classes than before.

Mr. Beyer asked how long a student is excluded once he has had the six unexcused absences. Mr. Johnston replied that if a student's absences fell during the first nine-week period (1st quarter), he could enroll at Sunset High School, an alternative high school, for the second nine-week period. If it happens during the 2nd nine-week period (2nd quarter), he can re-enroll in the regular high school for the second semester.

Mr. Beyer asked about bringing a student to Carson City to observe the Legislature versus bringing a whole class. Mr. Johnston replied that it would be a valid field trip for the whole class but an unexcused absence for one student to go.

Vice Chairman Foley stated concern that there was absolutely no flexibility in the policy as to these trips. She asked if she took a child to visit the United Nations and Washington, D.C., and this child missed six days of school, would the child be excluded. Mr. Johnston replied that was true. She further asked even with several weeks advance notification to the school. Mr. Johnston replied that the child would be excluded.

Mrs. Hayes asked where Sunset High School was located. Mr. Johnston replied that it is an evening high school located at Las Vegas High School. Mrs. Hayes asked if a child was excluded and wanted to go on to Sunset, would transportation be provided. Mr. Johnston said not at this time.

Mrs. Hayes stated she was concerned with the lack of flexibility of this attendance policy. She also stated that with everyone trying to place more emphasis on the family, she felt this policy was undercutting the family.

Mr. Johnston replied that he felt they had brought more families together in support of this policy. He said parents were appreciative of this policy helping them keep their students in school.

Mrs. Hayes stated that there still was no flexibility for families who must take vacation time during the school year.

The next presenter against AB 387 was Terry Mannion, Director of Secondary Education, Clark County School District, who is responsible for the high schools in the district.

Before Ms. Mannion began her presentation, Mr. Vergiels stated that if the Clark County School District was saying that if you take a straight A student out of school for six days for a vacation that he would be excluded from school, then Mr. Vergiels intended to do what he could to change that policy.

Ms. Mannion stated she has been in the Clark County School District for twenty years and has served as a junior high teacher, a senior high teacher, a counselor, a dean of students responsible for discipline, a director of student activities, a high school assistant principal, a junior high principal and now is Director of Secondary Education. She continued that last spring there was a subcommittee of the school board that was investigating the raised graduation requirements, and they found that there is no problem with the raised requirements but the students must be in attendance in the classroom. At that point, the attendance policy was created. She said the policy was not developed overnight, and that the figures were based on a state law that said a student, in order to get one credit, has to be in class 120 hours. If a student misses 19 days of school, he cannot meet that requirement. She stated that the school has the students for 180 days; the family has them for 185 days each year. She said that the parent has no legal responsibility other than to take care of a child and not abuse him. The school district is responsible, she said, for making sure that a student can pass a minimum competency exam, drive a car, be morally straight, take responsibility, be honest, 175

She said it was not unreasonable for the school to ask that parents have these students attend school the 180 days for this education.

Ms. Mannion said the district's intent was to establish an attendance policy, monitor it very closely, and evaluate it after one year. She said parts of the program have been improved since the first semester, such as now having a data processing program for monitoring attendance and for notifying parents of absences. She said parents are notified after the second unexcused absence, the fifth unexcused absence, the fifth absence of any kind, the ninth absence, the twelfth, the fifteenth, and the eighteenth. She said teachers have said that not only have they seen an improvement in attendance, but also in attitude and in achievement. Students who were attendance problems last year are still problems this year. However, some now are beginning to notice that someone means business and they are making changes.

Ms. Mannion said the attendance law was written to keep kids in school, not to kick them out. She said that during the first semester they have had over 41,000 more teaching days with students than they had last year during the first semester -- and this is with 800 fewer students in the county.

Ms. Mannion said that they have made some changes with the hard core attendance problems but basically they have made the biggest change with the borderline students who missed once or twice or maybe ten times, who used to take advantage because of lack of penalties.

Ms. Mannion said that the last two days have been enrollment days for the fourth quarter at Sunset High School. Over 200 students have enrolled there in the last two days. Ms. Mannion says she draws the conclusion that maybe they have taught some students some responsibility, that someone means business and they had better get to school. These students will be a particular part of the study of this policy. She said there will also be open hearings in June after a total statistical battery has been prepared to show what has happened over this year.

Ms. Mannion said they know there have been some problems, some calls to Legislators, but no matter what policy is developed, this will happen. The three areas of concern being investigated now are clerical accuracy, chronically ill students who miss a lot of school, and the area of requests from parents for pre-arranged absences.

Ms. Mannion continued that the Legislature has mandated minimum competency; the schools must have the students in classes to fulfill this mandate. She asked that they be allowed to complete the full year with the new attendance policy so that they can investigate, analyze, and modify as the community and the educators of the school district deem necessary.

Chairman Craddock asked Ms. Mannion about the difference between achievement tests and competency tests. She explained that the achievement tests show what grade level of achievement each student

has in various areas; the competency test proves whether they have the competency of a certain level. Chairman Craddock asked if the achievement tests could not be used in place of the competency tests. Ms. Mannion replied that they probably could, except that the competency tests had been mandated by the Legislature so were still necessary.

Chairman Craddock asked Ms. Mannion what she specifically would recommend he do in the case of his son going to New York for six days. She replied first of all, that if he withdrew his son from school and did not enroll him during the six days in any other Clark County School, it would still be counted as absences. Ms. Mannion said she felt that six days should not be needed for attending graduation exercises. Chairman Craddock replied that the six days was to save the difference between \$238 and \$604 per plane ticket by traveling from Tuesday to Tuesday. He asked again what she specifically would recommend he do in this case. Ms. Mannion replied that she would recommend he do just what she had done for her own son, she drove and he went on the airlines so as to miss the least amount of days.

Mrs. Hayes asked how many students have been excluded this semester. Ms. Mannion replied that she did not have those figures yet, but the figures for the first semester were on page 21 of EXHIBIT B, 1,780 excluded due to absences. Mrs. Hayes asked how many had been excluded a year ago. Ms. Mannion said that there was no category for this last year, but on this same page it shows the total withdrawals of 1,250 last year, first semester and 2,254 this year, first semester. However, she pointed out that of these numbers, last year 184 re-enrolled the next semester and this year, 788 re-enrolled the next semester.

Mrs. Hayes asked if a student missed part of first period, were they marked absent for the whole day. Ms. Mannion replied that they would not be marked absent for the period or for the whole day. Mrs. Hayes said she had heard from a parent that when she kept her daughter out for a dental appointment, and arrived during a period, her daughter was marked absent for the whole day. This parent said that the next time, she would just keep her out the rest of the day to spend time with her daughter. Ms. Mannion asked that Mrs. Hayes refer these parents to her so that these problems could be corrected immediately when they occur.

Mrs. Hayes said she commended the district for trying to solve the attendance problem because it had been bad in the past.

Mrs. Hayes asked if a student had an unexcused absence due to a family trip, could they make up that homework. Ms. Mannion replied that it was up to the teacher. Mrs. Hayes asked about excused absences. Ms. Mannion said that students may make up homework for excused absences.

Mrs. Hayes asked why this policy was not implemented in the elementary grades. Ms. Mannion said that it was developed as a result of having a problem in the 9th through 12th grades, and she did not know if it might be used in the elementary grades later.

Mr. Rackley asked if Ms. Mannion felt the school board might begin to relax the policy in the areas such as Chairman Craddock's problem. Ms. Mannion replied that she could not guess as they had not sat down to discuss these problems and probably will not until all of the figures are in at the end of this school year. Mr. Rackley stated he did not like this kind of a bill, but he was concerned that the school district did not seem to take into account extenuating circumstances. Ms. Mannion said that this was why the appeal process had been developed and it should be used in these cases.

Mrs. Hayes said she had to disagree with Ms. Mannion's previous statement that the parent's only responsibility was not to abuse a child. Mrs. Hayes said the parent is the one who is called into court if a child is in an accident or gets a ticket.

Mrs. Hayes asked again if Chairman Craddock's son misses the six school days due to a family trip, will he be excluded. Ms. Mannion said he would be and Chairman Craddock could then appeal as a parent.

Vice Chairman Foley asked if the principal would then consider the extenuating circumstances or would he just say that he could do nothing as the absences were unexcused. Ms. Mannion said that the district had asked principals to be very strict this year in reading the policy to the letter of the law, but that she could not answer for how fifteen different principals might react. Ms. Foley asked that even if this student might be a senior and the class valedictorian, he still would be excluded. Ms. Mannion said that was true.

Mr. Coulter said he also did not like this kind of legislation, but felt that it was necessary due to the lack of flexibility of the attendance policy. Ms. Mannion said that this was one of the three areas of concern that she had mentioned earlier, and that it would be discussed in detail at the end of the year but no decision would be made before that time.

Ms. Mannion stated an example of a student who needed to go to Japan for a seemingly very valid reason, however, they could not let him go and continue in school. Several committee members stated they thought he should be allowed to go if he made up the work. Ms. Mannion said that interaction in a classroom cannot be made up. She said if you could learn from the books without a class setting, teachers would not be needed.

Mr. Malone said his own son was brought to Carson City with the Boy Scouts, his son being Governor for the day. His son also went to Chicago for three days vying for top Boy Scout in the nation. Mr. Malone stated he felt his son could easily miss these days as he was a good student, could easily make up the work but he was not allowed to, and Mr. Malone said he would defy anyone who tried to exclude his son from school because of reasons such as these. Mr. Malone said his constituents are coming to him with these same types of problems, and he felt this situation could be remedied with prior arrangements from parents. Mr. Malone asked how Ms. Mannion felt about these situations. She reiterated that this was one of the areas that would be addressed at the end of the school year.



Mrs. Hayes said a parent had called her to complain that her daughter, a very good student normally, had been cutting and since the mother worked, the daughter had been intercepting the absence notices at home. The mother and daughter went to the appeal and were told they might as well not be there because it would not change anything. The mother called Mrs. Hayes, Mrs. Hayes called a school board member, and the student eventually got back into school. Mrs. Hayes stated the appeal process is a good process but not if minds were made up in advance. Ms. Mannion said this never should have happened and that she would like the specifics from Mrs. Hayes.

Chairman Craddock said that including the tax increase in his neighborhood, he had received more questions from concerned people on this subject than any other single issue during the last five Legislative Sessions.

Chairman Craddock read a statement from the magazine COMPACT by William R. Hazzard, Lawyer and Professor of Administrative Policy Studies at Northwest University: "The image of the state in all its legal splendor fighting some child or some parent in matters of conscience or schooling somehow doesn't square with my notion of rational education."

The next presenter against AB 387 was Lucille Lusk, Clark County School Board Member, who thanked the committee for a chance to discuss mutual concerns for youth. She noted the bill as introduced would totally destroy the authority of local school boards to deal with truancy. Truancy problems in the past in Clark County have been extensive and this policy has produced some marked success. Mrs. Lusk said they are aware the policy does need to be reviewed and perfected. She relayed an example of a student that was taught responsibility by way of this policy. She asked that the school district be allowed to continue with the policy in order to compile accurate statistics so that the policy can be studied and changed if necessary over the summer. Mrs. Lusk said to change the policy before the end of one school year might result in more problems rather than less problems. She said that past attendance problems were so severe that learning was hampered. Local school boards must have the ability to address this concern to continue to serve the community in the capacity for which they were elected.

Mrs. Hayes asked if there was a time limit in which to submit absence excuses. Mrs. Lusk said they have two days. Mrs. Hayes asked what happened if they still forgot the excuse after that time. Mrs. Lusk said consideration was given during the appeal process.

Chairman Craddock stated he appreciated the committee's indulgence for him to continue discussing his personal student problem. He asked Mrs. Lusk if she felt it was proper for parental pressures to bring consideration to the administrators by the board of trustees. Mrs. Lusk replied that flexibility has been given from time to time by administrators in specific problems. She said that at this time, during this particular school year, that would be a very difficult situation to handle. She said this is one of the specific areas to be considered this summer.

Mrs. Lusk said she would like to answer a few questions that were previously asked of someone else. One, counting tardies as absences, which she felt could be handled procedurally. She would like these parents to be referred to her for correction of the problem. Second, the question of why this policy is not at the elementary level, Mrs. Lusk said those pleased with the successes of the policy do want to extend it to the elementary level but not until the "bugs" have been worked out of it over this school year.

Chairman Craddock noted a previous incident whereby a student with pre-arrangement with the school went on a special trip and did make up all of the work missed. However, her grade was lowered, even though the work was well done, due to the number of absences. He felt there was no flexibility in this policy either. Mrs. Lusk asked if he was aware this was a previous policy but was not part of this attendance policy now discussed. Chairman Craddock said that he was aware of this but was making the point of another experimental policy with no flexibility which resulted in the lowering of a grade of a very good student.

Vice Chairman Foley asked about a student who misses school to attend an athletic event which might not be offered at her school, such as gymnastics. Mrs. Lusk replied school sponsored athletic events would be excused absences, but this student attending on her own would be an unexcused absence. Ms. Mannion answered from the audience that all athletic events are after school.

Chairman Craddock asked when the policy of no absenteeism as relates to athletic events went into effect. Mr. Johnston answered from the audience approximately three to five years ago, with a few exceptions when a contract was signed and is still on-going.

Next testifying was Dr. Lyman, President Clark County School Board, against AB 387. He thanked the committee for this chance for the Clark County School District to testify with respect to this bill regarding their attendance policy. He said he affirmed what has been presented so far. He said the Clark County School District is not in the business of expelling students from school. He said they are in the business of educating children and have adopted this policy to enhance that goal.

Dr. Lyman referred to EXHIBIT B and said that this material tells the story that this policy is working. He said they have increased attendance, student morale, and the policy is concurred with by the majority of the personnel. He said that this doesn't mean that there aren't problems. Dr. Lyman said that they want to handle the cases separately that have problems and to have one full year for a trial of this policy. He stated that if they had found problems with the policy the first semester, that it was not working, they then would have changed the policy mid-year. However, they feel it is working well.

Dr. Lyman said that the policy has been developed at the secondary level because at this level the absences are usually generated by the student, versus absences generated by the family at the elementary level.

Dr. Lyman continued that the problem of parents wanting to take students out of school for various reasons is an emotional problem; it is not a general problem, but an isolated problem. Dr. Lyman said to Chairman Craddock that he felt that he should pay the extra money and have his son return home sooner. Dr. Lyman said this was not because the boy would learn more in school than where he is visiting, but what his absences would do to the educational process of the entire district. He continued that the minute the school district lets anyone arbitrarily take their child out of the classroom, the teacher is getting the message that she must teach her subject around thirty different schedules. He said that teachers have said this year in six months they have taught the same material that took all of last year to teach. Dr. Lyman said that in his opinion teachers give just as much as the best student can assimilate and a little bit more. He said that if you take the best students out of the class, the level drops of the educational materials presented in that class.

Dr. Lyman said that he would be in favor of pre-arranged absences if they could look to the Clark County School District and say this is the best performing school district in the entire world, but this cannot be said yet. The district test scores have dropped over the last ten years. He said that when they get to the point that they can say they are at their maximum and pulling students out of class is not going to have a detrimental affect on the entire class, then he said he would support pre-arranged absences, but this cannot be done yet.

Dr. Lyman asked on behalf of the board that the policy be left alone right now until the year has passed and the policy can be studied.

Mr. Coulter said that he did not feel there was a need for this bill until he had heard this testimony. He said he felt Dr. Lyman had made some incredibly sweeping statements such as if you take the "A" students out of the classroom you would have problems. He said he thought the district was showing no flexibility whatsoever. Mr. Coulter said he felt Mrs. Lusk showed flexibility but that Dr. Lyman did not, stating that at the end of the year you still wouldn't allow the parent to make this decision. He said he could not believe a public official was coming forward saying that what the parent wants to do with a kid should not be way up there in terms of importance.

Dr. Lyman said he disagreed and that flexibility was shown through appeals to the principals. Mr. Coulter said that was fine but the principals had been told to interpret the policy rigidly. Dr. Lyman replied that he had not said that, but Ms. Mannion had. He said that exceptions have been made but that they have not wanted to broadcast the fact. Dr. Lyman said that what they have done is write a policy to back up the decision of a principal if he feels a student should still be excluded after an appeal.

Dr. Lyman said that if a parent is able by statute to take their child out of school, it completely destroys the attendance policy and the educational environment of that classroom. He said he would argue that very strongly.

(Continued Minutes)

Mr. Vergiels commended the policy in that it tells parents and students that education should be valued. He wanted the school district to know that the idea of the policy is good; the committee is only objecting to the rigidity of the policy. Mr. Vergiels noted that Clark County had made many good moves lately such as not letting custodians interrupt the classes, or the loudspeaker. He felt the past attendance policy was way too permissive and this type of policy is past due. Mr. Vergiels said their concern was with about 2% of the policy, the six days of unexcused absence.

Dr. Lyman said the six days was not easily arrived at, and actually it is five days. He said some wanted 1 or 2 days; in private institutions you may be out without a refund after only three days. Dr. Lyman said that it is up to each teacher whether or not they allow homework to be made up after unexcused absences. He said they would like to know of teachers who do not let any students make up work so that they can work with that teacher.

Vice Chairman Foley said that she has been told that teachers were asked to interpret this policy rigidly just as the principals were asked to. Dr. Lyman said he was not aware of this being done. He said the problem stems when one committee member gets a phone call that someone's child was not allowed to make up some work but they knew that in another school the students were allowed to do this. He said it was hard to have total control over this. This is one of the areas they will be studying in the summer.

Mr. Malone noted that it was ironic with all the crowded classrooms that the district was trying so hard to keep them that way. He stated he was very much in favor of a strict attendance policy, however, he felt this policy was overkill. Mr. Malone said he thought this policy had little to do with juvenile crime because he felt most juvenile crime was committed on the way home from school anyway. Mr. Malone noted that the Metropolitan Police Department has had outstanding cooperation when working with the schools in Clark County.

Mr. Malone asked if time was not the real problem and wouldn't it save more time to handle an unexcused absence a little different instead of having to go back to an appeal afterward taking up principal and teacher time. He said he did not think this bill would be necessary if the school board would be willing at this time to give a little more leeway to the parents as to some of these unexcused absences. Mr. Malone said that some of the reasons were very valid as brought out before in several instances. He said many junior officers where he works cannot take vacation time when they want it, they take whatever days are left after senior members have decided. Families cannot help these kinds of problems.

Dr. Lyman said he could not speak for the rest of the board, but for himself, if he thought the teachers and principals agreed that this was a workable thing to do, he would support it.

Mrs. Lusk spoke from the audience to say that members of the board are considering such a policy. Dr. Lyman agreed.

Mr. Horn said that in 1977 AB 400 to do with competency was developed because kids were not learning, test scores were going down, newspapers were writing editorials attacking the schools. Kids were not learning because they were not in school. A strict attendance policy was developed to put the kids there and up comes AB 387 that handcuffs you. Mr. Horn said he can see why the school district is unhappy with even having to be at this meeting.

Chairman Craddock said that he was concerned with Dr. Lyman's statement that when the school district becomes the best in the world, then they will consider a change in the attendance policy. Dr. Lyman said this was a philisophical statement and was not practical. Chairman Craddock said he was glad to hear that the board was considering changes now.

Chuck Neely, Clark County School District, spoke from the audience that the teachers were preparing a statement through CCTA in support of the attendance policy. However, the statement did not arrive in time for the meeting.

Next presentor was John Hawkins, Nevada State School Boards Association, who distributed his written statement to the committee, attached as EXHIBIT C. He said this statement had been drafted last fall, not for AB 387, but it is pertinent to the views that have been expressed. He said school boards would oppose AB 387 for the following reasons: one, we believe it is an infringement on local school board's autonomy, and two, we believe that student discipline should remain at the local level where policies can be developed and administered on that level with public input. He said that this should be handled with public input through the Open Meeting Law, with the public having the ability to go to court if they do not receive what they are after. He said the school trustees face the problem of re-election if they support a policy that won't stand up to public sentiment. Mr. Hawkins said they were making a plea to the committee, respectfully, that matters of this nature be reserved for the local school districts and not legislated from the State Legislature and mandated upon seventeen school districts.

Next testifying was Doug Byington, Legislative Chairman for the Nevada Association of School Administrators. He said he did not want to rehash what had already been said. He said administrators have very few weapons to deal with some of the problems in the schools but the truancy law is one that they do have and they hate to see it lost. He said they are very concerned with attendance. He said that if a student comes to school because he wants to be near his friends but he does not want to attend any classes, the administrators need to have the truancy laws available to exclude these students from the school. He said AB 387 would take this authority away from the schools.

Chairman Craddock said that since a couple of the committee members had already left, no action would be taken on the bill today. The meeting was adjourned at 5:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dorothy Mobley,  
Committee Secretary

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ASSEMBLY

AGENDA FOR COMMITTEE ON..... EDUCATION.....

Date THURS, 4/2/81..... Time 3:00 P.M. Room 214.....

Bills or Resolutions  
to be considered

Subject

Counsel  
requested\*

AB 387

Relaxes treatment of truancy in  
public schools.

\*Please do not ask for counsel unless necessary.



61ST SESSION NEVADA LEGISLATURE

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

ATTACHED TO MINUTES OF April 2, 1981

ITEM SCR 3 -- Directs Nevada state library and department of education  
to study possibilities of joint or shared use of facilities,  
staffs or other resources of school and public libraries.

MOTION:  DO PASS  AMEND  INDEFINITELY POSTPONE  RECONSIDER

Moved by Mr. Beyer Seconded by Mr. Malone

AMENDMENT: Page 1, line 16, delete "study the possibilities of" and insert  
"develop where possible,". Page 1, delete line 20 and insert:  
"RESOLVED, That this development include ways of". Delete lines  
22 through 25. Amend the title of the resolution on the second  
line by deleting: "study the possibilities of" and inserting  
"develop".

Moved by Mr. Beyer Seconded by Mr. Malone

AMENDMENT: \_\_\_\_\_

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded by \_\_\_\_\_

VOTE:	MOTION		AMEND		AMEND	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Beyer	XX	_____	XX	_____	_____	_____
Coulter	XX	_____	XX	_____	_____	_____
Foley	XX	_____	XX	_____	_____	_____
Hayes	XX	_____	XX	_____	_____	_____
Horn	XX	_____	XX	_____	_____	_____
Malone	XX	_____	XX	_____	_____	_____
Rackley	XX	_____	XX	_____	_____	_____
Vergiels	XX	_____	XX	_____	_____	_____
Craddock	XX	_____	XX	_____	_____	_____
TALLY:	<u>9</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>0</u>	_____	_____

ORIGINAL MOTION:  Passed  Defeated  Withdrawn  
 AMENDMENT:  Passed  Defeated  Withdrawn  
 AMENDMENT:  Passed  Defeated  Withdrawn

## STATEMENT BY BOB CRADDOCK TO THE ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE 4/2/81

Some four years ago I had a son scheduled for high school graduation in the Clark County School District. The college of his choice, in New York City, invited him to visit the campus to help him decide whether or not he thought he could adapt to that environment for four years. He accepted their invitation and missed several days of school -- as memory serves me, 3 or 4 days. With his accumulation of absences, he would not have had enough credits left to qualify for entrance under a strictly construed Clark County School District attendance policy.

That brings me to a future concern since he is scheduled to receive his degree May 13th. His brother, a junior in high school, has a deep desire to attend these commencement exercises with his family. In my judgment, my family belongs together in New York City during that week.

Additionally, with the lower cost of air travel on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, we could save several hundred dollars by departing on Tuesday, May 12th, and returning on Tuesday, May 19th. This is a total of six days out of school.

I don't think it proper for me to withdraw my son from school before leaving and re-enroll him on return as has been suggested as a method of circumventing the rules.

I have received several calls from parents expressing concerns about the rigidity of the attendance policy. This policy, in the mind of many, seems to preclude the use of good judgment.

While we may, in part, applaud the results of the attendance policy in question, we may also question the wisdom of continuing without change.

We do recognize that some young people may not belong in today's classroom setting. We must continue, though, to search for alternate methods of placement with increased emphasis on what students will do and where they will go after expulsion.

The very least we can do is allow for educational opportunity that exceeds anything our school district can offer for a comparable period of time.



CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
DIVISION OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

FIRST SEMESTER ATTENDANCE REPORT

February 26, 1981

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# FIRST SEMESTER ATTENDANCE REPORT

## INTRODUCTION

During the summer of 1980, the Board of School Trustees approved a new attendance policy and regulation governing students enrolled in grades 9 through 12. The purpose was to increase student attendance by reducing class cutting and truancy. Secondary schools implemented this regulation in September of 1980. The purpose of this report will be to analyze the effect of the implementation of the regulation during the first semester of this, the 1980-81, school year. This report will include:

- . A comparative attendance analysis
- . Statistics regarding student attendance days
- . Analysis of student attendance by grade
- . An analysis of student withdrawals
- . Surveys of administrator, dean, counselor, and teacher reactions

Also included will be comments relating to current areas of concern regarding the implementation of the regulation. This will be followed by a summary and recommendation. It should be noted that while this report intends to compare attendance statistics of the first semester 1979-80 with first semester 1980-81, limited detailed data were available for the first semester of 1979-80.

## DATA REVIEW

### I. Comparative Attendance Analysis Percentages (Attachment No. 1)

Attendance figures are reported on a monthly basis for all schools in the Clark County School District. A comparative analysis of the monthly attendance of students enrolled in high schools in grades 9-12 during the first five reporting periods of the 1980-81 school year, with those numbers reported for the same time period of the 1979-80 year, reflects a consistent increase in attendance throughout the District. It should be noted that attendance significantly improved immediately with the first reporting period, during which time, few students were excluded. The gradual increase in percentages reflects a continued pattern of excellent attendance of students who remained enrolled and the gradual exclusion of students excessively absent. Statistics for ninth grade students enrolled in junior high schools are included in the junior high school tabulation as part of Attachment No. 1.

Total comparative percentages for all the metropolitan senior high schools are listed below:

<u>Attendance Period</u>	<u>1979-1980</u>	<u>1980-1981</u>	<u>+ or -</u>
1	95.4	97.4	+ 2.0
2	91.9	96.3	+ 4.4
3	91.2	96.6	+ 5.4
4	90.0	96.6	+ 6.6
5	88.1	97.0	+ 8.9

II. Increased Student Attendance Days (Attachment No. 2)

A comparison of the number of days in which students were in attendance reveals that students were in class 41,139 more student days during the first semester of the 1980-81 school year than during the same time period of the 1979-80 school year. This number is even more significant due to the fact that there were 891 more students enrolled in 1979-80 than in 1980-81.

III. Interim Report on Student Attendance - Comparative Student Attendance by Grade (Attachment No. 3)

The Department of Research and Development compared the attendance patterns of a stratified random sample of students in grades 9-12 during the initial four months of both the 1979-80 and 1980-81 school years. Conclusions reached by this study reflected that 12th grade absenteeism decreased by 52 per cent, 11th grade absenteeism decreased by 34 per cent, 10th grade absenteeism decreased by 27 per cent, and 9th grade absenteeism decreased by 36 per cent.

IV. Analysis of Withdrawals (Attachment No. 4)

A comparative analysis of the number of student withdrawals in grades 7-12 the first semester of 1979-80, with those statistics for a similar time period of 1980-81, reflects a net increase in withdrawals of from 1,066 to 1,466 students. This represents an increase from 2.6 per cent to 3.6 per cent of the total enrollment of that group. An analysis of the various "Totals by Reason" during each time period reveals a 66 per cent reduction of withdrawals for work and/or apprenticeship program, an 85 per cent reduction of withdrawals for enlistment in military service, a 70 per cent reduction of withdrawals due to lack of attendance, and a 56 per cent reduction of withdrawals due to general disinterest.

The above indicates that a more precise and accurate method of identifying and recording student withdrawals is now being utilized. Also, in past years, it was often the case that many chronically absent students were not withdrawn and remained on teacher roll books. The new regulation now requires that these students must be withdrawn from teacher roll books.

Sunset High School and Opportunity School played important roles in the implementation of the regulation. Students in grades 10-12, who were excluded during the first quarter of the first semester, were encouraged to reenroll at Sunset High School during the second quarter. Similarly, ninth grade students were encouraged to enroll at Opportunity School. Reenrollment statistics to these schools are listed below:

<u>School</u>	<u>Second Quarter 1980-1981</u>
Sunset High School	315
Opportunity School	<u>30</u>
	345

V. School Staff Reactions (Attachment No. 3)

The Department of Research and Development conducted opinion surveys of administrators, deans, counselors, and teachers regarding several facets of the attendance regulation. The responses from all groups were highly supportive of the changes in the regulation. The most significant aspect of the surveys was the 97 per cent endorsement of the administrators, deans, and counselors who felt that the attendance policy should be continued. Of the classroom teachers surveyed, 95 per cent held the same opinion. In addition, administrators, deans, and counselors stated that they believed a high percentage of parents (89 per cent) and students (85 per cent) endorse the regulation.

AREAS OF CONCERN

I. Attendance Recording and Reporting

By its very nature, the implementation of this regulation requires accurate attendance record keeping and timely reporting to parents by the classroom teacher and the school. Because the attendance of each secondary student is recorded six times daily, the potential for human error does exist.

Principals have increased activities to monitor student attendance records. An auditing of the attendance letters which are sent to parents will take place. In the past, we have been unable to correct errors in attendance data. A process has been established to eliminate this problem.

## **II. Students Absent Due to Chronic Illness**

A significant number of students are absent due to chronic illness for short-term periods of time which does not qualify the students for homebound instruction. However, these students do accumulate more than 18 days of absence. A review of this problem will take place which may result in giving consideration to students in this category.

## **III. Requests for Prearranged Absences**

A common concern expressed by parents is that the regulation prohibits students from being absent to participate in extended family activities. Many suggestions have been made to revise the regulation to provide for a system to prearrange absences for students desiring to participate in such activities. This, too, is under review.

### **SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION**

Student attendance has improved at a significant rate. Despite a slight enrollment reduction, more students were in attendance each day during the first semester. The reactions of administrators, deans, counselors, and teachers towards the regulation has been overwhelmingly favorable.

There is deep concern about the number of students who have not reenrolled. The staff is currently gathering data regarding the excluded students who did not reenroll.

In the future, the Student Attendance Principals' Committee will be reviewing the regulation and the related statistical information. From this review, recommendations for possible revisions in the regulation or procedures may be forthcoming.

It is recommended that the present Board Policy No. 5113 and Administrative Regulation No. 5113.2 remain without change until the conclusion of this school year.

**COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ATTENDANCE PERCENTAGES  
HIGH SCHOOLS**

Schools	1 1979-80	1 1980-81	2 1979-80	2 1980-81	3 1979-80	3 1980-81	4 1979-80	4 1980-81	5 1979-80	5 1980-81
Las Vegas	96.2	94.3	95.2	92.8	94.0	94.7	92.9	96.7	91.0	96.7
Rancho	94.1	95.9	92.6	96.1	91.0	96.1	90.3	97.2	89.4	97.6
Eldorado	94.5	98.1	89.5	97.9	93.0	96.3	91.6	97.3	90.3	98.0
Western	95.7	97.1	91.5	97.6	89.1	98.2	87.4	98.0	84.5	98.4
Bonanza	96.7	97.3	93.8	97.1	92.3	97.1	91.6	96.9	90.7	97.1
Clark	96.3	98.2	92.4	96.7	90.9	96.2	88.0	96.2	87.3	96.4
Valley	98.0	99.5	95.7	96.3	95.4	97.4	93.5	96.7	91.6	97.1
Sunset	85.3	86.5	77.4	86.2	79.3	90.6	80.8	91.3	77.9	92.8
Chaparral	94.7	99.5	92.9	98.0	92.1	97.8	91.0	97.0	87.9	97.3
SNVTC	95.6	97.3	85.5	94.5	83.9	95.2	82.6	94.1	81.3	94.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>95.4</b>	<b>97.4</b>	<b>91.9</b>	<b>96.3</b>	<b>91.2</b>	<b>96.6</b>	<b>90.0</b>	<b>96.6</b>	<b>88.1</b>	<b>97.0</b>

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ATTENDANCE PERCENTAGES  
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

Schools	1 1979-80	1 1980-81	2 1979-80	2 1980-81	3 1979-80	3 1980-81	4 1979-80	4 1980-81	5 1979-80	5 1980-81
John C. Fremont	95.8	96.0	92.4	94.6	91.4	93.4	89.5	92.2	85.4	92.5
Roy Martin	96.9	96.7	92.7	94.6	91.8	94.1	90.1	93.2	88.0	93.1
J.D. Smith	96.1	97.1	92.3	93.4	91.6	92.6	88.5	91.1	88.8	92.6
Jim Bridger	96.3	95.4	93.2	93.3	93.1	93.1	91.6	91.7	89.7	91.8
Ed Von Tobel	94.6	95.5	91.1	91.6	90.9	91.4	89.1	88.4	87.5	90.9
Dell Robison	95.7	97.1	92.5	94.4	92.0	93.6	87.8	91.6	89.3	93.2
Frank Garside	96.6	97.2	93.6	94.2	92.4	93.1	88.2	91.5	88.4	92.0
Robert Gibson	97.2	97.6	94.8	96.0	93.5	94.4	89.0	93.5	92.0	94.1
J. Harold Brinley	96.4	96.9	92.5	93.4	92.6	92.8	88.4	91.0	87.6	92.1
Kenny Guinn	97.9	98.0	94.0	95.5	92.6	94.8	89.5	93.8	88.4	94.7
Hyde Park	96.8	96.7	94.6	94.3	92.8	93.4	88.7	92.1	89.5	92.2
K.O. Knudson	95.2	93.6	91.6	90.7	90.5	90.7	87.4	88.2	87.2	89.5
J.E. Cashman	95.7	96.1	91.0	91.5	90.4	91.8	87.7	90.7	82.7	91.8
William Orr	96.6	96.1	91.5	93.1	90.8	91.1	88.2	90.2	88.9	90.1
Woodbury	97.0	96.6	94.5	94.6	93.5	94.1	90.5	91.5	89.5	91.5
Cannon	96.8	97.0	94.6	95.1	93.3	94.5	91.3	92.3	91.5	93.7
Total	96.4	96.5	93.0	93.8	92.1	93.1	89.1	91.5	88.0	92.3




COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ATTENDANCE PERCENTAGES  
OUTLYING SCHOOLS

Schools	1 1979-80	1 1980-81	2 1979-80	2 1980-81	3 1979-80	3 1980-81	4 1979-80	4 1980-81	5 1979-80	5 1980-81
Lyal Burkholder	95.9	97.6	92.1	93.5	90.1	92.6	86.5	90.1	86.2	91.6
Indian Springs	95.4	97.5	89.3	93.8	89.3	92.7	86.9	91.4	84.4	92.0
Elton Garrett	97.9	97.9	95.7	95.8	94.5	94.7	91.7	93.6	89.8	93.6
Boulder City	97.4	97.8	94.7	96.4	94.2	95.2	90.0	93.9	92.1	94.6
Moapa Valley	97.4	98.3	93.5	95.9	92.8	93.8	92.5	94.0	92.7	94.8
Virgin Valley	97.8	97.9	95.1	95.5	93.2	95.6	94.0	94.7	91.2	94.2
Basic	96.1	96.6	93.1	94.7	91.5	94.1	89.8	93.7	89.1	95.2
Total	96.6	97.4	93.3	94.8	91.9	93.9	89.5	92.8	89.1	93.8

## STUDENT ATTENDANCE DAYS

	<u>1979-1980</u> <u>First Semester</u>	<u>1980-1981</u> <u>First Semester</u>
Enrollment Number of days in semester	25,242 <u>    x 90</u>	24,351 <u>    x 90</u>
Maximum number of student attendance days	2,271,780	2,191,590
Minus		
Number of student attendance days lost due to absence	<u>- 276,490</u>	<u>- 155,161</u>
Total student attendance days	1,995,290	2,036,429


  
 In 1980-1981, students were present for 41,139 more days of instruction.

## INTERIM REPORT ON STUDENT ATTENDANCE

It is the purpose of this paper to provide an interim status report on the impact of the revised regulations governing the attendance of students in grades nine through twelve, for the 1980-81 school year. The intention of this report is two-fold: 1) to provide a comparative analysis of student attendance prior to and following enactment of the revised attendance regulations, and 2) to give an account of the reactions of school staff members on the effect of the newly adopted attendance regulations.

### Comparative Student Attendance

A stratified random sample of students was extracted from grades nine through twelve. The sample populations were then conditioned to ensure that the students were continuously enrolled from the beginning of the 1979-80 school term. Utilizing the Student Attendance Profile (S2015005), attendance data for each student were recorded for the first four school months of the current and preceding school terms for students in grades ten, eleven, and twelve. For ninth grade students, attendance was recorded for this school year only; however, comparative analysis was provided with a sample of last year's ninth graders.

The recorded student attendance data were keypunched and statistically treated by means of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The statistical analysis involved a t-test to determine if the mean differences were statistically significant. A t-test is a statistical procedure designed to determine whether two groups, as represented by their means, are significantly different. In computing an index of significance, the t-value takes into account the mean differences, the sample variability, and the sample size.

### GRADE TWELVE

School Term	N-Count	Mean	S.D.	t-Value
1979-80	309	13.3	11.25	13.01*
1980-81		6.4	5.64	

\*Statistically Significant

The data displayed indicate that the current 309 twelfth graders were absent an average of 6.4 days for the first four school months during 1980-81 compared to 13.3 days for the same duration during 1979-80. In terms of percentage comparison, their incidence of absenteeism decreased 52 percent.

### GRADE ELEVEN

School Term	N-Count	Mean	S.D.	t-Value
1979-80	333	10.2	9.13	8.20*
1980-81		6.7	5.46	

\*Statistically Significant

While the results for eleventh graders were not as pronounced, they are, nevertheless, quite impressive and statistically significant. In terms of a percentage comparison, the degree of absenteeism decreased 34 percent.

GRADE TEN

School Term	N-Count	Mean	S.D.	t-Value
1979-80	425	9.0	8.74	5.88*
1980-81		6.6	5.97	

\*Statistically Significant

The comparative analysis for tenth graders was, likewise, statistically significant and reflected a 27 percent decrease in their absenteeism rate.

GRADE NINE

(1979-80 to 1980-81)

School Term	N-Count	Mean	S.D.	t-Value
1979-80	425	9.0	8.74	6.45*
1980-81	391	5.8	5.00	

\*Statistically Significant

When this year's sample of ninth graders' absenteeism is compared to a sample of last year's ninth graders, the recorded difference in rate of absenteeism is again statistically significant. This year's ninth graders' absenteeism reflects a 36 percent decrease when compared to last year's ninth grade students.

In each instance of comparison, the statistical analysis indicates that the results are statistically significant at a level such that the results would not be replicated by chance in one out of one thousand times.

The results from these data would indicate that the absenteeism of students in grades nine through twelve is significantly lower since enactment of the new attendance regulations.

### School Staff Reactions

The reactions of all administrators, deans, and counselors of schools housing grades nine through twelve were solicited regarding the effect of the revised attendance policy. In addition, a geographic cross section of classroom teachers was surveyed concerning their opinion of the policy.

The survey data is partitioned by senior high school and junior high school levels. The reason for this division is warranted by the fact that at the junior high schools surveyed approximately two-thirds of the student body are not affected by the revised policy.

Administrator, dean, and counselor reactions were as follows:

**QUESTION:** Do you feel student attendance has improved since the enactment of the current attendance policy?

	YES		NO		OTHER*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Senior High School	121	99	0		1	1
Junior High School	57	95	1	2	2	3

It is apparent that the vast majority of administrators, deans, and counselors feel that student attendance has improved. Virtually all of the respondents, 121 out of 122, at the senior high school level reflected a positive response.

**QUESTION:** In your opinion, do the teachers endorse the new attendance policy?

	YES		NO		OTHER*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Senior High School	120	98	1	1	1	1
Junior High School	58	97	1	2	1	2

It is the shared opinion of almost every one of the administrators, deans, and counselors that teachers endorse the new attendance policy at both the senior and the junior high school levels.

**QUESTION:** In your opinion, do the students endorse the new attendance policy?

	YES		NO		OTHER*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Senior High School	104	85	12	10	6	5
Junior High School	45	75	7	12	8	13

While the opinion of the junior high respondents is slightly less positive than that of the senior high respondents (75% and 85% respectively), both groups feel a large majority of students support the present attendance policy.

**QUESTION:** In your opinion, do the parents endorse the new attendance policy?

	YES		NO		OTHER*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Senior High School	109	89	8	7	5	4
Junior High School	51	85	6	10	3	5

Parental support is perceived to be relatively high and basically the same at the junior and the senior high school levels by the administrators, deans, and counselors.

**QUESTION:** Do you feel the attendance policy should be continued?

	YES		NO		OTHER*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Senior High School	119	98	1	1	2	2
Junior High School	57	95	1	2	2	3

Endorsement to continue the present attendance policy is virtually unanimous with a resounding "Yes" by 176 of the 182 respondents.



**QUESTION: Is the appeal process as presently structured a functional procedure?**

	YES		NO		OTHER*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Senior High School	110	90	4	3	8	7
Junior High School	57	95	1	2	2	3

The appeal process as presently structured is functional in the opinion of 92 percent (167 of 182) of the respondents.

It is apparent from the opinions expressed by the administrators, deans, and counselors, at both the senior and the junior high school levels, that endorsement for the new attendance policy is extremely positive. They further felt that teachers, students, and parents endorse the current approach to attendance. Possibly the most significant aspect of the survey is the extremely high endorsement (97%) of the administrators, deans, and counselors who felt the attendance policy should be continued.

The reader is reminded that enthusiasm by the junior high school people could reasonably be predicted to be lower than that of the senior high school staff inasmuch as only the ninth graders are affected by the new attendance policy. In effect, approximately two-thirds of the junior high student body are not affected by the policy change. Several comments by junior high school staff members urged an extension of the policy to cover seventh and eighth grade students.

Teacher reactions were as follows:

**QUESTION: Has student attendance improved in your classroom since enactment of the current attendance policy?**

	YES		NO		OTHER*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Senior High School	367	95	15	4	6	2
Junior High School	97	66	42	29	7	5

Evidence of the highly positive impact of the new attendance policy is clearly indicated with 95 percent of the teachers indicating "Yes" at the senior high schools. As would be anticipated, the impact is lower at the junior high level but effective in the opinion of two out of three teachers.

**QUESTION: Do you feel the present attendance policy should be continued?**

	YES		NO		OTHER*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Senior High School	370	95	11	3	7	2
Junior High School	133	91	8	5	5	3

Out of 541 teacher responses, 503 (93%) felt the present attendance policy should be continued. Most certainly this is an overwhelming majority of teacher support for the attendance policy at both levels.

**QUESTION: Are you able to cover more instructional material as a result of the attendance policy changes?**

	YES		NO		OTHER*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Senior High School	242	62	114	29	32	8
Junior High School	62	42	71	49	13	9

At a ratio of two to one, senior high school teachers indicated they could cover more instructional material as a result of the attendance policy change.

Junior high school teachers were almost equally divided on this issue, which seems reasonable when considering that only ninth graders are affected by the policy change.

**QUESTION: Has the need for make-up work decreased with the current attendance policy?**

	YES		NO		OTHER*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Senior High School	309	80	57	15	22	6
Junior High School	83	57	51	35	12	8

It is apparent from the teacher responses that the time and energies expended on make-up work have decreased since the enactment of the present attendance policy.

**QUESTION:** Has student attitude toward learning improved?

	YES		NO		OTHER*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Senior High School	198	51	140	36	50	13
Junior High School	54	37	64	44	28	19

The senior high teachers are generally divided in their opinion as to whether student attitude has improved toward learning. Approximately one out of three junior high school teachers felt student attitude toward learning had improved. Overall, the responses should be considered positive because a "No" response does not indicate a deterioration of student attitude.

**QUESTION:** Has student discipline improved?

	YES		NO		OTHER*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Senior High School	225	58	120	31	43	11
Junior High School	70	48	55	38	21	14

The opinion of teachers regarding the improvement of student discipline is generally positive, with 295 indicating a "Yes" response versus 175 "No" responses. The reader is again cautioned not to assume when other than a "Yes" response is recorded that student discipline has deteriorated.

As was found with administrators, deans, and counselors, the classroom teachers' responses were highly supportive of the adopted changes governing student attendance. The continued disparity between junior and senior high school respondents was again evident and predictable. The specific responses to the individual questions and related comments provided by teachers clearly indicate the policy to be an effective approach toward amelioration of the problems previously associated with student absenteeism.

The survey instruments offered an open format for providing suggested regulation changes and/or comments. Literally hundreds of responses were offered by the school staff members. The responses were extremely diverse and have been shared with the appropriate central office personnel and are presently being reviewed.

In an attempt to capture the flavor of the more repetitive comments, the following are provided:

"It is working."

"This is a great deal of work, but it is paying dividends."

"Student attendance has improved . . . ."

"School Board and administrative support has been super to this point. Their support must continue for the regulation to be effective."

"I feel this is one of the best things our District has done in several years to improve student achievement."

"It should apply to 7th and 8th graders."

"We still need a lever to discourage tardies."

"Suspension days should count against students."

"The paperwork has increased 4 or 5 times."

"Reduce number of excused absences . . . ."

"Update computer program . . . ."

"Excluded seniors who cannot possibly graduate due to lack of credit should not have to be readmitted the second semester."

"There is a need for more clerical assistance."

"Let's continue and strengthen it. Don't back off, as it would be a step backwards."

### Summary

The preponderance of data very definitely indicates that the attendance of students has improved with the enactment and energetic implementation of the revised regulation governing student attendance. Continued refinement of the procedures in tandem with parental and student awareness of the strict enforcement of attendance requirements will most certainly prove beneficial to the students of the School District.

DLB  
2/2/81

\*In spite of the survey's "Yes" or "No" structure, several respondents qualified a third response.

CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
DIVISION OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

WITHDRAWAL REPORT

Below are listed withdrawal statistics comparing the first semester 1979-80 with the first semester 1980-81. It should be noted that the reasons for withdrawal include the category of "Excluded Due to Absences." This category was added this year to specify the number of students withdrawn as a result of the implementation of the new attendance policy and regulation. These statistics are extracted from the District's computer enrollment reports printed at the conclusion of each semester.

Withdrawal Statistics - Grades 7 - 12

<u>Totals by Reason</u>	<u>First Semester 1979-80</u>	<u>First Semester 1980-81</u>
Physical or Mental Ability	8	11
Work or Assist Family	111	61
Working and/or Apprenticeship Program	158	54
Enlistment in Military Service	26	4
Expulsion	2	4
Lack of Attendance	581	169
Marriage	34	13
Pregnancy	23	18
General Disinterest	192	84
Consistent Failure to Attend	0	1
Unwillingness to Obey Regulations	21	13
Request of County or State (Juvenile Authorities)	3	4
Completed Program in Special Education	0	1
Enrolled in Adult Education Program	91	37
Excluded Due to Absences	N/A	1,780
	<u>1,250</u>	<u>2,254</u>
<hr/>		
Number of these students who reenrolled	<u>-184</u>	<u>-788</u>
Total Withdrawals	1,066	1,466
	2.6% of enrollment	3.6% of enrollment

STATEMENT OF OPPOSITION TO ANY LEGISLATIVE  
CHANGES THAT COULD RESULT IN THE LOSS OF  
LOCAL CONTROL OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Our State and our Nation have produced a system of education that has served us well. Certainly, there are not grounds for complacency, but just as certainly there are not grounds for despair.

When one considers the diversity of Nevada school population and the fact that it is ranked number one in respect to student migration and turnover, it is fair to say that Nevada schools have made major achievements.

It is true that responsibility for this achievement must be shared with parents and professional educators, but it was achieved under a form of governance that is unique throughout the world. The concept of local control vested not in appointed professionals but in elected laymen.

During this legislative session and in the years ahead, the basic responsibility for meeting the educational needs of children will continue to reside in the local boards because this is the choice of the American public which once asked and now demands greater and greater involvement and greater and greater accountability.

The Boards of Trustees of our State share these public concerns and will continue to make every effort to maintain local control of our schools and assure that the public schools are held accountable through the most effective method known--public elections.

The school trustees have, therefore, resisted and will continue to resist any and all efforts to dilute local and lay control. School boards have demonstrated that they are able to respond with flexibility to meet contemporary needs and that they can be constructive and innovative.

It is strongly recommended, therefore, that training programs for trustees continue to be designed by trustees rather than being imposed by legislative mandate. In addition, legislators are urged to carefully protect existing authority of trustees and to return authority to locally elected officials whenever possible. The trustees willingly accept the responsibility for our local schools and ask for continuation of the authority that must accompany responsibility.



Suspension and Expulsion of Students

Nevada State School Boards Association Proposal:

To give local school trustees the authority to determine causes for suspending or expelling students.

Reason for Requested Change:

School trustees must have the authority to maintain discipline within the schools that they are charged with operating. Giving trustees the authority to determine causes for suspension and expulsion would enable them to better maintain student discipline. The maintenance of discipline is the number one concern of the public as determined by national polls<sup>1</sup> and it is a responsibility that the trustees can and will meet if they are empowered to establish and make known definite courses for suspension and expulsion.

<sup>1</sup>Harris Poll Results: 1978-1979  
Harris Poll Results: 1979-1980

NRS 392.467 as it would be amended to read:

392.467 Suspension or expulsion of pupils.

1. The board of trustees of a school district may authorize the suspension or expulsion of any pupil from any public school within the school district in accordance with rules and hearing procedures complying with requirements of due process of law.

2. No pupil may be suspended or expelled until he has been given notice of the charges against him, an explanation of the evidence and an opportunity for a hearing, except that a pupil who poses a continuing danger to persons or property or an ongoing threat of disrupting the academic process may be removed from the school immediately upon being given an explanation of the reasons for his removal, and pending proceedings, to be conducted as soon as practicable after removal, for his suspension or expulsion pursuant to this section.

3. The provisions of chapter 241 of NRS do not apply to any hearing conducted under this section. Such hearings shall be closed to the public.

4. *Causes for the suspension or expulsion of any pupil for a school district may be authorized by the board of trustees.*

(362:32:1956)--(NRS A 1959, 808; 1967. 457; 1975, 1471; 1977, 609) --  
(Substituted in revision for NRS 392.030)