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Washoe County School District

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April 3, 2003

Senator William J. Raggio
Legislative Building, Room 1222
Carson City, Nevada 89701

Dear Senator Raggio:

Thank you, Senator Raggio, for on-going opportunity to work with you on the important concepts of Senate Bill 191.

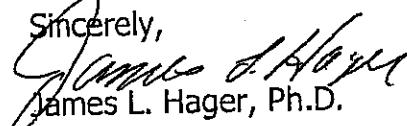
In addition to the ten "friendly" amendments proposed for your consideration on March 10, 2003, the Washoe County School District has an additional four "friendly" amendments that will be presented this afternoon in the hearing. Those new "friendly" amendments focus upon these issues:

1. Students in Attendance for Less than One Full Academic Year;
2. School Improvement Plan;
3. Technical Assistance; and
4. Shared Responsibilities for High Student Academic Achievement.

We believe that you will find the fourth of these issues of great interest, because it proposes the incorporation of the school-parent compact as described in NCLB into the context of Senate Bill 191. Copies of the above-mentioned "friendly" amendments and supporting materials have been attached for your reference.

Please let me know, if questions arise about any of these proposed amendments or other issues connected with Senate Bill 191. We continue to look forward to working with you, members of the Committee, and LCB staff on this crucial legislative proposal to effectively implement the No Child Left Behind Act in Nevada's schools.

Sincerely,


James L. Hager, Ph.D.
Superintendent

c: Board of Trustees
Pepper Sturm, Legislative Counsel Bureau

Dr. Dotty Merrill

Lonnie Shields

EXHIBIT I Committee on Finance

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**Washoe County School District
Suggested Friendly Amendments
April 3, 2003**

The Washoe County School District respectfully offers several friendly amendments for consideration by the members of this Committee—in addition to the proposed amendments offered earlier on March 10, 2003.

**1. STUDENTS IN ATTENDANCE
FOR LESS THAN ONE FULL ACADEMIC YEAR**

NCLB, Section 1111, page 37, lines 12-19, indicate that the results of assessments used for determining adequate yearly progress at the school and district level should not include students who have attended school for less than one full academic year, either at the school or within the district, "except that the performance of students who have attended more than one school in the local education agency in any academic year shall be used" to determine the district's adequate yearly progress. We strongly encourage the members of this Committee to integrate that concept into Senate Bill 191. In accordance with NCLB, the results for students who have not attended a single school for a full academic year must be disaggregated from results considered for adequate yearly progress. And, further, in accordance with NCLB, those students should be included in the results for the local education agency, only if they have been enrolled in that local agency for a full academic year even if they have not attended a single school for a full academic year.

2. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Beginning on page 14 of SB 191, Section 9, continuing to page 18 of the bill, the school improvement planning process is delineated. Following this process as written will have a tremendous fiscal impact upon school districts. We strongly encourage the committee to use the language that appears in the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). That language as it appears on NCLB, Section 1116, pp. 86-88, sets forth the federal expectations of the planning process for school improvement. Copies of those pages have been attached for the Committee's reference. Because this process is not as cumbersome as the process currently contained in SB 191, the fiscal impact will be greatly lessened. We support inclusion of the NCLB language to replace the language regarding school plans that appears on Section 9.

**Washoe County School District
Suggested Friendly Amendments
April 3, 2003**

3. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

In SB 191, page 23, Section 15 (2) concerns "technical assistance" to be provided to a school by the board of trustees. Although much in SB 191 describes the "support team" for the school, little is stated regarding the definition of "technical assistance." We notice the reference to *20 U.S.C. § 6316(b)(4)* which states

describe how the school will provide individual student assessment results, including an interpretation of such results, to the parents of a child who participates in the assessment required by section 6311(b)(3) of this title.

We strongly encourage the Committee to amend this section to include the language as contained within NCLB, Section 1116, page 89, so that clarity exists about what school districts are expected to provide to schools in need of improvement. A copy of that page from NCLB has been attached for the Committee's reference.

**4. SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES FOR
HIGH STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT**

Nowhere in SB 191 do we find is the language of shared responsibility for student achievement as it appears on NCLB. Section 1118 of NCLB, pp. 124-125, specifically set forth "Shared Responsibilities for High Student Academic Achievement." Copies of those pages have been attached for the Committee's reference. This concept appears in the context of "Parent Involvement" as described elsewhere in Section 1118.

Because we believe that it is critical for the school-parent compact as described in NCLB to be created in order to establish and emphasize the shared responsibility "for improved student achievement and the means by which the school and parents will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the State's high standards," we strongly encourage the Committee to incorporate the language about this school-parent compact into the context of SB 191 in an appropriate place within the bill.

1 would likely yield more accurate and reliable infor-
 2 mation on what such student knows and can do,
 3 the local educational agency may make a deter-
 4 mination to assess such student in the appropriate
 5 language other than English for a period that does
 6 not exceed 2 additional consecutive years, provided
 7 that such student has not yet reached a level of
 8 English language proficiency sufficient to yield
 9 valid and reliable information on what such student
 10 knows and can do on tests (written in English) of
 11 reading or language arts;

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12 “(xi) include students who have attended
 13 schools in a local educational agency for a full aca-
 14 demic year but have not attended a single school
 15 for a full academic year, except that the perform-
 16 ance of students who have attended more than 1
 17 school in the local educational agency in any aca-
 18 demic year shall be used only in determining the
 19 progress of the local educational agency;

20 “(xii) produce individual student interpretive,
 21 descriptive, and diagnostic reports, consistent with
 22 clause (iii) that allow parents, teachers, and prin-
 23 cipals to understand and address the specific aca-
 24 demic needs of students, and include information
 25 regarding achievement on academic assessments
 26 aligned with State academic achievement stand-
 27 ards, and that are provided to parents, teachers,
 28 and principals, as soon as is practicably possible
 29 after the assessment is given, in an understandable
 30 and uniform format, and to the extent practicable,
 31 in a language that parents can understand;

32 “(xiii) enable results to be disaggregated with-
 33 in each State, local educational agency, and school
 34 by gender, by each major racial and ethnic group,
 35 by English proficiency status, by migrant status, by
 36 students with disabilities as compared to non-



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“(A) REVISED PLAN.—After the resolution of a review under paragraph (2), each school identified under paragraph (1) for school improvement shall, not later than 3 months after being so identified, develop or revise a school plan, in consultation with parents, school staff, the local educational agency serving the school, and outside experts, for approval by such local educational agency. The school plan shall cover a 2-year period and—

“(i) incorporate strategies based on scientifically based research that will strengthen the core academic subjects in the school and address the specific academic issues that caused the school to be identified for school improvement, and may include a strategy for the implementation of a comprehensive school reform model that includes each of the components described in part F;

“(ii) adopt policies and practices concerning the school’s core academic subjects that have the greatest likelihood of ensuring that all groups of students specified in section 1111(b)(2)(C)(v) and enrolled in the school will meet the State’s proficient level of achievement on the State academic assessment described in section 1111(b)(3) not later than 12 years after the end of the 2001–2002 school year;

“(iii) provide an assurance that the school will spend not less than 10 percent of the funds made available to the school under section 1113 for each fiscal year that the school is in school improvement status, for the purpose of providing to the school’s teachers and principal high-quality professional development that—

“(I) directly addresses the academic achievement problem that caused the school to be identified for school improvement;

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1 “(II) meets the requirements for profes-
2 sional development activities under section
3 1119; and

4 “(III) is provided in a manner that affords
5 increased opportunity for participating in that
6 professional development;

7 “(iv) specify how the funds described in clause
8 (iii) will be used to remove the school from school
9 improvement status;

10 “(v) establish specific annual, measurable ob-
11 jectives for continuous and substantial progress by
12 each group of students specified in section
13 1111(b)(2)(C)(v) and enrolled in the school that
14 will ensure that all such groups of students will, in
15 accordance with adequate yearly progress as de-
16 fined in section 1111(b)(2), meet the State’s pro-
17 ficient level of achievement on the State academic
18 assessment described in section 1111(b)(3) not
19 later than 12 years after the end of the 2001–2002
20 school year;

21 “(vi) describe how the school will provide writ-
22 ten notice about the identification to parents of
23 each student enrolled in such school, in a format
24 and, to the extent practicable, in a language that
25 the parents can understand;

26 “(vii) specify the responsibilities of the school,
27 the local educational agency, and the State edu-
28 cational agency serving the school under the plan,
29 including the technical assistance to be provided by
30 the local educational agency under paragraph (4)
31 and the local educational agency’s responsibilities
32 under section 1120A;

33 “(viii) include strategies to promote effective
34 parental involvement in the school;



1 “(ix) incorporate, as appropriate, activities be-
2 fore school, after school, during the summer, and
3 during any extension of the school year; and

4 “(x) incorporate a teacher mentoring program.

5 “(B) CONDITIONAL APPROVAL.—The local edu-
6 cational agency may condition approval of a school plan
7 under this paragraph on—

8 “(i) inclusion of one or more of the corrective
9 actions specified in paragraph (7)(C)(iv); or

10 “(ii) feedback on the school improvement plan
11 from parents and community leaders.

12 “(C) PLAN IMPLEMENTATION.—Except as pro-
13 vided in subparagraph (D), a school shall implement
14 the school plan (including a revised plan) expeditiously,
15 but not later than the beginning of the next full school
16 year following the identification under paragraph (1).

17 “(D) PLAN APPROVED DURING SCHOOL YEAR.—
18 Notwithstanding subparagraph (C), if a plan is not ap-
19 proved prior to the beginning of a school year, such
20 plan shall be implemented immediately upon approval.

21 “(E) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY APPROVAL.—
22 The local educational agency, within 45 days of receiv-
23 ing a school plan, shall—

24 “(i) establish a peer review process to assist
25 with review of the school plan; and

26 “(ii) promptly review the school plan, work
27 with the school as necessary, and approve the
28 school plan if the plan meets the requirements of
29 this paragraph.

30 “(4) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—

31 “(A) IN GENERAL.—For each school identified for
32 school improvement under paragraph (1), the local edu-
33 cational agency serving the school shall ensure the pro-
34 vision of technical assistance as the school develops and
35 implements the school plan under paragraph (3)
36 throughout the plan’s duration.

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1 “(B) SPECIFIC ASSISTANCE.—Such technical
2 assistance—

3 “(i) shall include assistance in analyzing data
4 from the assessments required under section
5 1111(b)(3), and other examples of student work, to
6 identify and address, problems in instruction and
7 problems, if any, in implementing the parental in-
8 volvement requirements described in section 1118,
9 the professional development requirements de-
10 scribed in section 1119, and the responsibilities of
11 the school and local educational agency under the
12 school plan, and to identify and address solutions
13 to such problems;

14 “(ii) shall include assistance in identifying and
15 implementing professional development, instruc-
16 tional strategies, and methods of instruction that
17 are based on scientifically based research and that
18 have proven effective in addressing the specific in-
19 structional issues that caused the school to be iden-
20 tified for school improvement;

21 “(iii) shall include assistance in analyzing and
22 revising the school’s budget so that the school’s re-
23 sources are more effectively allocated to the activi-
24 ties most likely to increase student academic
25 achievement and to remove the school from school
26 improvement status; and

27 “(iv) may be provided—

28 “(I) by the local educational agency,
29 through mechanisms authorized under section
30 1117; or

31 “(II) by the State educational agency, an
32 institution of higher education (that is in full
33 compliance with all the reporting provisions of
34 title II of the Higher Education Act of 1965),
35 a private not-for-profit organization or for-prof-
36 it organization, an educational service agency,



1 programs under this part, including the planning, review,
2 and improvement of the school parental involvement policy
3 and the joint development of the schoolwide program plan
4 under section 1114(b)(2), except that if a school has in
5 place a process for involving parents in the joint planning
6 and design of the school's programs, the school may use
7 that process, if such process includes an adequate represen-
8 tation of parents of participating children;

9 "(4) provide parents of participating children—

10 "(A) timely information about programs under
11 this part;

12 "(B) a description and explanation of the cur-
13 riculum in use at the school, the forms of academic as-
14 sessment used to measure student progress, and the
15 proficiency levels students are expected to meet; and

16 "(C) if requested by parents, opportunities for reg-
17 ular meetings to formulate suggestions and to partici-
18 pate, as appropriate, in decisions relating to the edu-
19 cation of their children, and respond to any such sug-
20 gestions as soon as practicably possible; and

21 "(5) if the schoolwide program plan under section
22 1114(b)(2) is not satisfactory to the parents of partici-
23 pating children, submit any parent comments on the plan
24 when the school makes the plan available to the local edu-
25 cational agency.

26 (d) SHARED RESPONSIBILITIES FOR HIGH STUDENT ACA-
27 DEMIC ACHIEVEMENT.—As a component of the school-level pa-

28 rental involvement policy developed under subsection (b), each
29 school served under this part shall jointly develop with parents
30 for all children served under this part a school-parent compact
31 that outlines how parents, the entire school staff, and students
32 will share the responsibility for improved student academic
33 achievement and the means by which the school and parents
34 will build and develop a partnership to help children achieve the
35 State's high standards. Such compact shall—

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1 (1) describe the school's responsibility to provide high-
2 quality curriculum and instruction in a supportive and ef-
3 fective learning environment that enables the children
4 served under this part to meet the State's student academic
5 achievement standards, and the ways in which each parent
6 will be responsible for supporting their children's learning,
7 such as monitoring attendance, homework completion, and
8 television watching; volunteering in their child's classroom;
9 and participating, as appropriate, in decisions relating to
10 the education of their children and positive use of extra-
11 curricular time; and

12 (2) address the importance of communication between
13 teachers and parents on an ongoing basis through, at a
14 minimum—

15 (A) parent-teacher conferences in elementary
16 schools, at least annually, during which the compact
17 shall be discussed as the compact relates to the indi-
18 vidual child's achievement;

19 (B) frequent reports to parents on their children's
20 progress; and

21 (C) reasonable access to staff, opportunities to vol-
22 unteer and participate in their child's class, and obser-
23 vation of classroom activities.

24 ~~“(e) BUILDING CAPACITY FOR INVOLVEMENT.—To ensure~~
25 ~~effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership~~
26 ~~among the school involved, parents, and the community to im-~~
27 ~~prove student academic achievement, each school and local edu-~~
28 ~~cational agency assisted under this part—~~

29 ~~“(1) shall provide assistance to parents of children~~
30 ~~served by the school or local educational agency, as appro-~~
31 ~~priate, in understanding such topics as the State's aca-~~
32 ~~demie content standards and State student academic~~
33 ~~achievement standards, State and local academic assess-~~
34 ~~ments, the requirements of this part, and how to monitor~~
35 ~~a child's progress and work with educators to improve the~~
36 ~~achievement of their children;~~

