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August 20, 2009

Dear Nevada Legislators:

In view of the economic struggles facing most of us, I thought you might appreciate knowing the good uses to which the Clark County School District (CCSD) is dedicating funding provided under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

It is important to note that CCSD continues to ensure that schools' plans are consistent with the intent of the ARRA funds:

- a. Spend funds quickly to save and create jobs; improve student achievement through school improvement and reform
- b. Ensure transparency, reporting, and accountability
- c. Invest one-time ARRA funds thoughtfully to minimize the "funding cliff"

To begin with, the State Fiscal Stabilization Funds were used to backfill falling sales tax revenues in 2009 and offset lower funding the District would have received from State funds. The offset resulted in the ability to retain approximately 1,100 employees. This was a tremendous benefit not only to the District but also to individuals who were facing loss of employment.

The District also is following the guidelines set forth in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) for the use of the Title I funds. The amount has been determined for the mandatory set-asides for School Choice, Supplemental Educational Services (SES), Staff Development, Parent Involvement, Private Schools, and Highly Qualified Teachers (HQT), which equals 36 percent of the ARRA Title I funds. A per-pupil allocation has been determined and an expansion of the number of Title I schools beyond the existing 83 schools will occur. A total of 68 new ARRA Title I schools will receive an allocation based on their enrollment. Each school has submitted a plan for the use of the funds. The plan was developed by each school's School Improvement Team, which included parent input. In addition, community input meetings were conducted and school administrators were included in discussion about the application.

The District's application for ARRA Title I funds includes:

- Staff development
- Expansion of pre-K programs
- Parent involvement
- Online classes for credit retrieval
- Additional instructional staff (132 teachers, 82 school-based support staff, 23 temporary staff)
- Saturday school
- Summer school programs
- Before- and after-school tutoring/remediation programs

With respect to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the District's ARRA IDEA application is consistent with current statutory and regulatory requirements and addresses the allowable core reform goals, which included:

- a. State-of-the-art assistive technologies
- b. Districtwide staff development for special education and regular education teachings
- c. Focusing on reading, math, writing, science, and positive behavioral supports
- d. Develop and expand the capacity to collect and use data to improve teaching and learning
- e. Expand the availability and range of inclusive placement options for preschool children with disabilities
- f. Hire transition coordinators

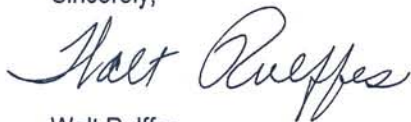
Specifically, the CCSD's application for ARRA IDEA funding includes:

- Extended-day opportunities
- Positive behavioral supports
- Instructional programs expansion
- Autism supports
- Site-based teacher mentors
- Assistive technology
- Dropout prevention
- Credit retrieval
- Parent involvement
- Professional development
- School-to-work programs
- University partnerships
- Data collection for Response to Instruction
- Liaison prep buyouts
- Early Childhood instructional enhancements

The District will separate the ARRA funding for Title I and IDEA for the purpose of tracking expenditures and measuring the impact on student achievement. An accountability plan and electronic submission system has been developed to address the ARRA reporting requirements. Working in collaboration with the Nevada Department of Education (NDE), the Clark County School District's application and evaluation data will be available on the NDE Web site.

These are all worthy uses of the ARRA funds that benefit not only children but also employees and taxpayers. Your support of the Clark County School District and our efforts to use ARRA funds to the greatest advantages possible are most appreciated. Please feel free to contact my office if you have questions in this matter.

Sincerely,



Walt Rulffes  
Superintendent

cc: Members, Board of School Trustees  
Charlene Green  
Joyce Haldeman  
Lauren Kohut-Rost  
Jeff Weiler  
Kim Wooden  
Susan Wright