



Oversight Panel for School Facilities (AB353)

In recognition of Clark County's school facility needs, the 1997 Nevada Legislature passed Assembly Bill 353 (AB353). Prior to its passage, Nevada was one of only ten states that did not have some sort of state funding mechanism in place for school facility needs. Through this landmark legislation, the voters have an opportunity to approve a long-term solution, which meets the needs of our District's growing population.

In addition to identifying revenue sources for school construction, AB353 also requires the formation of local school facilities oversight panel, consisting of 11 members. Six members are elected officials (a Clark County commissioner, and city council representatives from Boulder City, Las Vegas, Henderson, Mesquite, and North Las Vegas). The Board of School Trustees appoints the other five committee members. The law specified the appointment of panel members with expertise in one of the following fields: engineering, finance, public works, gaming, and one representative of the general public.

The Clark County Oversight Panel for School Facilities began meeting in November 1997. As charged by law, they examined and made recommendations for financing the costs of new construction, design, maintenance, and repair of school facilities. Their recommendations included a strong endorsement of the property tax freeze, as well as approval of the other funding provisions of AB353.

The Oversight Panel continues with its responsibility of reviewing and approving or disapproving the request for the Board of School Trustees for the issuance of general obligation bonds as they are needed. If, for some unforeseen reason, the anticipated growth in Clark County were to slow down, the funds generated by the provision of AB353 would also decrease, as would the need for additional seats. This oversight panel could then elect to not approve the issuance of bonds, providing an additional level of assurance that tax money will not be spent unless the expenditures are necessary.

The 1998 Capital Improvement Program establishes a growth-based formula that generates the funds necessary to ensure all Clark County students have a place in a school with an environment conducive to learning. It combines funding sources approved by the Nevada Legislature in 1997 with a property tax rate freeze through the year 2008.