

MINUTES  
CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES  
EDWARD A. GREER EDUCATION CENTER, BOARD ROOM  
2832 E. FLAMINGO ROAD, LAS VEGAS, NV 89121

WORK SESSION

Wednesday, December 3, 2014

8:01 a.m.

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Roll Call:    Members Present  
Erin E. Cranor, President  
Linda E. Young, Vice President  
Patrice Tew, Clerk  
Stavan Corbett, Member  
Carolyn Edwards, Member  
Chris Garvey, Member  
Deanna L. Wright, Member

Pat Skorkowsky, Superintendent of Schools

Also present were: Paul Johnson, Board Counsel, District Attorney's Office; Carlos McDade, General Counsel, Office of the General Counsel; Kim Wooden, Deputy Superintendent, Educational and Operational Excellence Unit; Jhone Ebert, Chief Innovation and Productivity Officer, Innovative Teaching and Learning Unit, Technology; Danielle Miller, Assistant Superintendent, Instructional Design and Professional Learning Division; Joyce Haldeman, Associate Superintendent, Community and Government Relations; Cindy Krohn, Executive Assistant to the Board, Board Office; Lisa Chrapcynski, Administrative Secretary II, Board Office; and Stephanie Gatlin, Transcriber/Recording Secretary, Board Office.

**FLAG SALUTE**

Trustee Corbett led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

None.

**ADOPT AGENDA**

*Adopt agenda.*

*Motion: Tew    Second: Young    Vote: Unanimous*

*Trustee Wright was not present for the vote.*

## **APPROVE ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA**

Approval of consent agenda, as submitted, as recommended.

*Motion to approve.*

*Motion: Edwards Second: Young Vote: Unanimous*

*Trustee Wright was not present for the vote.*

2.01 SPECIAL COUNSEL RATE OF COMPENSATION. Discussion and possible action on approval of the rate of compensation of outside or special counsel employed by the District, as required by NRS 41.0344, is recommended. **(For Possible Action)**

[Contact Person: Carlos McDade] (Ref. 2.01)

**Strategic Imperative(s):** Clarity and Focus

**Focus Area(s):** Value/Return on Investment

## **BOARD MEMBER ARRIVES**

Trustee Wright arrived at the Board meeting at 8:05 a.m.

## **PRESENTATION BY THE NEVADA CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY**

Presentation and discussion from the State Charter Authority regarding Nevada charter schools.

Patrick Gavin, director, Nevada State Public Charter School Authority, gave a brief history of the Nevada Charter School Authority, and he discussed the Authority's purpose and focus.

Trustee Young asked how many charter schools the Authority currently oversees.

Mr. Gavin said they currently have 22 independent charter school boards which hold charters, and those boards operate approximately 31 campuses serving approximately 20,000 students. He said this number also includes a significant virtual portfolio.

Trustee Young asked how the Authority is funded.

Mr. Gavin said the schools receive their funds from the Distributive School Account (DSA). He said additionally, there are some local funds that are available to the charter schools. He said they are also permitted to assess a fee of up to 2 percent of revenues.

Trustee Young asked what that number is.

Mr. Gavin said it is approximately \$130 million for all schools in their portfolio.

Trustee Young asked about the arrangement between CCSD and charter schools and the funding that is used to provide support to the charter schools. She asked if there would be an opportunity for the District to receive some financial support in the future.

**PRESENTATION BY THE NEVADA CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY (continued)**

Mr. Gavin said CCSD has the option of assessing a sponsorship fee and said he would defer to the Superintendent as to how the District would manage those fees.

Trustee Garvey asked what the purpose is of charter schools.

Mr. Gavin said charters were created by the legislature to address a variety of needs. He listed some of those needs as being "a demand for choice and options, to promote pupil learning, to provide new professional opportunities for teachers, and to look at performance-based means of accountability."

Trustee Garvey said others have said charter schools were created because they have the means to solve problems that public schools cannot, and she disagreed that charters are able to help students and provide opportunities where the District is unable. She expressed concern with the level of transparency to the taxpayers in terms of funding charters. She also expressed frustration in the disparities between CCSD schools and charter schools when it comes to zoning.

Mr. Gavin explained that charter schools are held to the same degree of transparency as a public school district and must comply with public records requests, but do not have the responsibility of creating a document or a report that does not already exist. He said the Charter School Authority does not have any authority over zoning, and charter schools are able to zone in any area in the county for which they are authorized.

Trustee Garvey expressed concern that a charter school's performance rating is not based on how that particular school performed, but based on the school's board or the entity that holds that particular charter.

Mr. Garvin talked about the challenges and potential issues involved in changing the accountability framework for charters.

Trustee Garvey asked about the process for when a charter is underperforming.

Mr. Gavin said the school first receives a notice of concern, then a notice of breach, and then the schools receive a notice of closure, and the process can take up to three years.

Trustee Edwards submitted that another purpose of the creation of charter schools was to undermine unions.

Mr. Garvin said there are examples of high-quality charter schools that have unions. He said there is no statutory provision which bars union organizing in Nevada.

**PRESENTATION BY THE NEVADA CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY (continued)**

Trustee Edwards said she has concerns with the level of accountability to which charter schools are held in a number of areas; namely, how they spend and use their money and how much goes to rent, results in terms of student achievement, actually serving the population they claim they were created to serve, and consequences for schools that maintain a 1-star status for a number of years.

Mr. Gavin explained that charter schools are held to a particular standard for their audits as outlined in statute and offered that there are a number of opportunities for greater accountability. He said DSA is the primary source of funding for charters. He said schools are able to raise money for building, and there is also now a bonding capacity for charters. He said with regard to student achievement, there are some schools that have done consistently well, and there are some schools that have improved their performance rating. In relation to serving a particular population, He said schools are held accountable for meeting the at-risk provisions of their charter, and they are held accountable when they change their academic program. He said at this time the lowest 5 percent of schools that are Title I are subject to interventions through School Improvement Grants (SIG) funding.

Trustee Edwards said the boards of charter schools do not get very much professional development and do not seem to understand what their role is. She said it would be advantageous for these boards to take part in some professional development.

Mr. Gavin agreed with those comments and said one piece of their budget request was for incentive reimbursement funds for schools whose boards attend high-quality training.

Trustee Edwards asked Mr. Gavin for his opinion on charter schools being sponsored by for-profit organizations.

Mr. Gavin talked about different for-profit and nonprofit organizations that provide a variety of services to the schools in different capacities and said he is not necessarily opposed to for-profit organizations. He said there are many entities that districts and schools pay money to for services that make much higher profits than Education Management Organizations (EMOs).

Trustee Edwards asked if the Authority gets any Bill Draft Requests (BDRs) and what Mr. Gavin's plans and goals are for the upcoming legislative session.

Mr. Gavin said they currently do not receive any BDRs. He said he would like to see more educational options for all children, and he wants to ensure that those are high-quality educational choices that are also a good return on investment for public dollars. He said legislative goals are about expanding their portfolio and making sure that those schools are of the highest quality that they can be. He said he would like to see more equitable funding and targeted funding for children with disabilities, English language learner (ELL) students, and students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

**PRESENTATION BY THE NEVADA CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY (continued)**

Trustee Corbett asked about opportunities for increasing the dialogue between the school district and the Charter School Authority and for collaboration and learning.

Mr. Gavin offered that charters becoming more involved in the Nevada Association of School Boards (NASB) could be one potential opportunity for discussions and sharing best practices. He said he would like to see greater collaboration between the charters that are doing great work and their host districts. He wondered if there might be opportunities for greater collaboration between the District and the charters as the District works toward figuring out what type of autonomy to give to school leaders and how to build capacity in their schools.

Trustee Young said a concern that some principles have expressed to her is that some students come to their school from a charter after count day, and the timing seems to be manipulated so that the charter school keeps the funding.

Mr. Gavin said charter schools are obligated to enroll students throughout the year. He said the movement should be back and forth between charters and the District. He said he believes the statewide student information system would be able to give a clear dataset of students' movement between charters and districts. He offered that a possible solution for this would be to move from a count day based formula to a different student count mechanism. He said charter schools share the same challenge.

Trustee Young said she believes there is a movement to dissolve public education. She asked if there was any validity to the rumor that there was a focus by the state to bring more charter schools to Nevada.

Mr. Gavin said he has not heard anything except that whatever schools come in should be high quality.

Trustee Garvey commented that when charter schools do not have free and reduced lunch programs, they limit the choice for children living in poverty. She said in speaking to families that choose to move to charter schools say it is because there is no Common Core State Standards or there is no sex education curriculum or they believe the charter school shares their family's beliefs or values or they prefer the charter's testing requirements. She said she believes some charter schools are needed, but she also believes that charter schools have a way of circumventing the public scrutiny that the public education system has to contend with.

Mr. Gavin said he has a desire to expand on the demographic diversity of the total number of students being served. He said he believes the charters and the District can work collaboratively to be able to provide meals to all students.

**PRESENTATION BY THE NEVADA CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY (continued)**

Trustee Garvey said these conversations need to be very honest, and she questioned the motivating factor behind charters not providing free and reduced lunch so that charter schools are an option for all students. She said doing things better for kids at risk is not the motivator for charters, and maybe we should be asking why charter schools should exist and who they should be serving.

Mr. Gavin said charter schools have the same testing requirements and accountability requirements as public schools.

Trustee Tew said at-risk students need more support, remediation, and accommodation, and she asked how Mr. Gavin means to “raise the bar” for those students.

Mr. Gavin said higher quality applicants are likely to be people who realize that this is serious work and who will be more intentional and who will work harder. He said he believes better data can lead to more targeted interventions and remediation and perhaps more differentiated instruction based on students’ needs.

Trustee Edwards asked if charter schools have to hire licensed teachers and are those teachers evaluated under the new Teachers and Leaders Council (TLC) evaluation system.

Mr. Garvin said teachers for all core subject areas and areas of particular focus that are identified in the charter must be certified. He said charter schools can subscribe to the TLC evaluation system or they may use a different system that is aligned to the statute but not necessarily aligned to the TLC framework.

**BOARD MEMBER LEAVES**

Trustee Wright left the dais at 10:16 a.m.

**PRESENTATION BY THE NEVADA CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY (continued)**

The Board thanked Mr. Gavin for coming to speak with them and engaging in this dialogue.

**APPROVE MONITORING REPORT – EL-6: FINANCIAL CONDITION AND ACTIVITIES – 2013-2014**

Approval regarding the monitoring report for Governance Policy EL-6: Financial Condition and Activities – 2013-2014.

Superintendent Skorkowsky presented the monitoring report with the revision to include language reflective of the waiver signed by the Board to allow the District to go below the 2 percent ending fund balance requirement and to note the plans to increase the ending fund balance.

*Motion to accept EL-6 Financial Condition monitoring report in compliance.*

*Motion: Edwards Second: Young Vote: Unanimous*

*Trustee Wright was not present for the vote.*

## **BOARD MEMBER RETURNS**

Trustee Wright returned to the dais at 10:20 a.m.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

Presentation on the curriculum process to show how the Instructional Design and Professional Learning Division is supporting schools and how families are assisted with the implementation of the Nevada Academic Content Standards.

Ms. Ebert and Dr. Miller gave an update and overview of the Nevada Academic Content Standards; the District's curriculum development process; support for teachers, administrators, Board members, families, and the community in understanding the changes; and the Curriculum Engine.

Alaina Criner, Assistant Principle, Cortez Elementary School, and Jennifer Lile, Teacher, West Career and Technical Academy, shared their experience with the support of the Instructional Design and Professional Learning (IDPL) Division.

## **BOARD MEMBER LEAVES**

Trustee Garvey left the Board meeting at 11:20 a.m.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN AND PROFESSIONAL LEARNING (continued)**

Trustee Garvey asked how many teachers have accessed the Curriculum Engine.

Dr. Miller said she could provide that information to the Board.

Trustee Garvey asked for a report to come back with regard to how many schools are implementing the Professional Learning Community (PLC) plan and what the outcomes were.

Trustee Wright suggested encouraging teachers to post resources online for parents and students to access.

## **AGENDA PLANNING: ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

None.

## **DISCUSSION AND REQUEST FOR SPECIAL MEETINGS**

None.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

None.

**ADJOURN:** 11:34 a.m.

*Motion: Edwards    Second: Wright    Vote: Unanimous  
Trustee Garvey was not present for the vote.*