

Minutes
Clark County School District
Special Meeting of the Board of School Trustees
Edward A. Greer Education Center, Board Room
2832 East Flamingo Road, Las Vegas, Nevada 89121

Monday, February 24, 2025

5:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Members Present
Irene Bustamante Adams, President
Brenda Zamora, Vice President
Tameka Henry, Clerk
Isaac Barron, Member
Lorena Biassotti, Member
Linda P. Cavazos, Member
Lydia Dominguez, Member
Ramona Esparza-Stoffregan, Member
Adam Johnson, Member
Lisa Satory, Member
Emily Stevens, Member

Brenda Larsen-Mitchell, Ed.D., Interim Superintendent of Schools

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

We will be starting our meeting. I would like to welcome everyone today, and those that are paying attention online. I am President Irene Bustamante Adams, and I'll call the special Board meeting of February 24th, 2025 to order. The time is 5 p.m.

I would like to remind everyone to go ahead and silence your electronic devices. We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the territorial homelands of the Nuwu-the Moapa Band of Paiute and the Las Vegas Band of Paiutes. That's okay.

Flag Salute

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

We're going to go ahead and start with Item 1.02, the Pledge of Allegiance. Trustee Satory?

Adoption of the Agenda

Motion to adopt the agenda with the following changes, additional reference material is provided for item 2.01 and reference material is provided for item 2.02.

Motion: Johnson Second: Cavazos Vote: Unanimous

Motion Passed

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Before I move to Item 1.02, is there anyone that has not had a chance to fill out a public speaker card? Thank you, Ms. Monica. So Ms. Lisa are there public speaker cards up here?

Lisa Chrapcynski:

[inaudible 00:01:56].

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Oh, I know, but I have one person that would like a public speaker card. Is that... yes for you. Just fill it out. Thank you. Okay, see no public speaker for 1.02, then I will accept a motion to approve the agenda. Trustee Johnson?

Trustee Johnson:

Madam President, members of the board, I'd like to make a motion to adopt the agenda with the following changes. Additional reference material provided for Item 2.01, superintendent search, and in reference, material provided for Item 2.02, superintendent search.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. I have a motion, and Trustee Cavazos, would you like to second?

Trustee Cavazos:

I will second that motion.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Okay, I have a first and a second. Please cast your votes. That motion moves seven to zero.

2.01 Superintendent Search.

Presentation by the Superintendent Search Candidates (two of the four candidates), and candidate performance interviews conducted by the Board of Trustees, for the position of Superintendent of Schools, Clark County School District. [Contact Person: Irene Bustamante Adams] (Ref. 2.01) *(According to Governance Policy GP-3: Board Responsibilities)*

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

The next item is 2.01. This is going to be presentations by our four candidates that we have selected. I just want to thank our search firm for making sure that this was a great process. This is going to be our first round of interviews. Our questions will be focused on the candidate's presentation. That's where we're going to structure our focus. We're going to have a second round of interviews and that's when we're going to be able to ask more open-ended questions. But for this day, today we're going to focus on the candidate's presentation. Also ask the candidates to be concise in their answers. There's 11 of us and so we are disciplining ourselves to be concise as well, ask our question and use most of the time for you to answer. So with that then I'm going to turn it over to Dr. Perez.

Nanci Perez:

Thank you, members of the board. Really pleased to present to you tonight the four candidates over today and tomorrow that the board has chosen to interview from the slate of candidates. Just as a reminder, tonight you will hear from two candidates, their presentations are about 20 minutes long and then allows for approximately 30 minutes of Q&A. I will keep a time so that we know that when the interview actually starts there is the full 50 minutes.

Other than that, we always remind the board and the public that you are keeping in mind the leadership profile that was developed over months of work in engaging with the community at large, of which there was an amazing response here in Clark County to both the survey and all the opportunities. That leadership profile was developed, and that is both what the candidates know that they're presenting on as well as the SWOT analysis and also what the board should be keeping top of mind as they listen to the presentations and ask the questions tonight.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to serve this board as your consultants and at this point I'd like to turn it over to the first candidate.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Dr. Anzalone, hold on for a second. Please make sure to turn off your electronic devices. Want to give full respect to the presentation and the candidate.

Nanci Perez:

John, when you want the slide to go, just say next slide and they'll do that for you.

John Anzalone:

Okay, I can use it.

Nanci Perez:

Can he use the clicker, Joe?

John Anzalone:

Think he said I could.

Nanci Perez:

Yep, there you go. Perfect.

John Anzalone:

Good evening, President Bustamante Adams, trustees. John Anzalone, for the record. It feels good to say that again. I was reminded of something this morning, that everyone in this room is dealing with something big or small, and though a very special member of my family is going through a challenge right now and even with heavy hearts, my entire family is here today. It makes me remember how important that is, thank you, and how truly important family is. So I just wanted to let them know I love them very much and appreciate them being here.

It's hard to believe that 30 years ago I was a student at Chaparral High School and I sat right over there in this very room on a field trip with my government class. And if you had told me that one day that I would be here sitting in front of you to potentially become the superintendent of the Clark County School District, I would've never believed you.

So all the students watching out there, I'll tell you this, if I could be here, you can be anywhere you want to be. I'm reminded of all the years being here as a principal in front of you, supporting my teachers and students. Being here for the naming committee as we named the baseball field at Sierra Vista after Austin Chong, a dear student of mine who passed way too soon, trustee Cavazos you may remember that, and as an assistant superintendent presenting chronic absenteeism, expulsion data and other program updates, and now here today, this is truly a surreal experience.

As my family will tell you, I have dreamed of this ever since walking into my first classroom at Hyde Park Middle School 25 years ago. I would not be here today without my family and the success and hard work of so many. I thank you for this opportunity. I barely recognize that guy anymore.

As I prepared for today, I couldn't help but reflect on these core values that will guide the decisions we make for our students no matter what changes are ahead. This is how I lead in Camas, grounded to our values. And if something comes our way that deters us from our values, we simply move on. I want to thank the board for your service and your clear desire to work together on behalf of this community. It's critical that we move forward united. That is so needed right now in this world.

Returning to CCSD feels like home. I know the landscape, the people, the mission, and most importantly, I understand the urgency. Our staff and students cannot afford delays. It's time to get to work. I see my role with you as a true partner to the board, uniting this community and rebuilding trust.

It's so important that we seize this opportunity to show the entire country how great we can be. Bringing people together has defined my leadership, and that's exactly what I'll do. Elevate all

John Anzalone:

voices, strengthen relationships, and drive progress for student success. Trustees, here's my promise to you. I know it's been tough and I know without a permanent superintendent, the path can seem unclear, but together we can be a model of board governance throughout this entire state. Collaboration is in my DNA, it's how I lead. I think most of my colleagues would agree. We won't just work together, trustees, we will lead as one.

Moving my family to Camas has been an incredible experience. Leading the 11th highest ranked school district in Washington State out of 295 districts, I've seen firsthand the power of community in transforming student outcomes, and I'm ready to bring that knowledge back home. From my review of the leadership profile, community feedback, speaking with countless stakeholders, and using my deep knowledge of the district, four key themes have emerged, recruitment, retention, and a collaborative culture, data-driven and evidence-based decision-making, clear communication and community engagement, and being a strategic leader and a sound financial steward by bringing me aboard.

I know the district. I understand every corner of this system. I have the energy and I have a lot of gas in the tank. You see, this is not a stepping stone for me. This is it. This is my last stop. Coming back to CCSD, we start on day one. I understand Nevada politics, the schools and I understand the people. There will not need to be a get-to-know-you time. Again, CCSD students can't afford to wait, and we need bold leadership now.

To amplify the importance of this first theme, I want to take you to the spring of 2019. This is Brian to my right, an incredible student. He was signing his intent to go to University of Montana to play football. I was so proud of him that day. I noticed he was proud, but he had a heavy heart. He told me that his mother and grandmother were not going to be able to make it up to Montana simply because they did not have a reliable car to help him move.

So I said, Brian, get to class. I'll handle this. So I got with my team and consulted with my school community. We thought maybe by a couple of posts we'd get a loaner car for Brian's family. But no, after about a week, we had enough funds collected to buy Brian and his grandmother a reliable car to get to and from Montana as many times as they needed to. It was an incredible event for our community, but more importantly, I had two teachers come to see me that day, one was a brand new teacher and one was second or third year. And they said, "John, what we did for that family was unbelievable. But more importantly, we will never leave this school while you're here. But even more importantly, we will never leave this profession because that is the kind of culture that we wanted. That's what we craved."

And I will tell you that I brought that and cultivated that culture to Camas and it would be an honor to bring that back here because I feel that by making our staff, our teachers, our support professionals feel valued and feeling that they're in for something special, that's how we keep them. That's how we retain them, and that's how we keep the best of the best.

So much of this has already been happening in pockets in our district. Trustees, I know each of you is committed to recruit and retain. A strong commitment has been made to competitive early career salaries. Dynamic PLCs exist that build small communities within each school and multiple

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resources for staff that include mental health access through Care Solace. It's not just for our students.

CCSD offers diverse pathways through our CTAs, magnets, and of course, our comprehensive schools. For example, while here, I supported the creation of the first African-American experience and Latin American history courses and the launch of SV Beats, a recording studio and writer's room where students engage in innovative co-curricular activities. I'd like to recognize two exceptional leaders, Mr. Kenny Brown and Mr. Shane Gibson, who are here today and deserve credit for this incredible work. Thank you gentlemen, for being here.

However, we have several weaknesses in this area. First, there's a clear trust and transparency issue. It's a serious concern, causing a significant barrier for CCSD to take that next leap forward. Also, I'm concerned about the survey results that show a disconnect between district office and their understanding and valuing of the day-to-day realities of the classroom. The district is offering limited to no incentives to recruit the most talented educators to the lowest performing schools, not to mention a clear disparity in the salary schedule that is simply not demonstrating how much our most respected and seasoned educators are valued. Under my leadership that will change. This is where our partnership with CCEA, ESEA and CCASAP will be fostered and rebuilt.

So how do we fix this? My job isn't just policy. My job as a school district superintendent, I am here to ensure that I'm accountable for every facet of this organization. We do need to hit the reset button, and if selected, I will have senior leadership reapply for their jobs. My chief academic officer and CFO will be the most important hires. I will find and pay the best in America to come here. Yes, we will look at Nevada first deeply, but if we can't find it, we'll not be afraid to reach out and bring the best of the best here because I can't do this alone. And if we are going to see real outcome improvements, we need bold and innovative leaders to guide this work. So no matter the district, no matter the district at all, our primary responsibility as administrators is to ensure we are truly seeing, valuing and serving all students.

To do this, we must allow our teachers to teach and our leaders to lead. This role is not about control, this role is not about micromanagement, and this role is not about confusing classroom observation with investigations. No, it's about being there to support, being there, to provide coaching, and to raise the bar and challenge those we serve. This is how we will keep the best and the brightest right here in CCSD.

Community engagement and communication. CCSD has had great opportunities with our SOTs, and though some are thriving, others need improvement. This community strongly desires to be involved in decision-making. I know that you are committed to transparency through your town halls, your legislative forums and community forums and live-streaming meetings like this. Lundy Elementary is a prime example of what happens when this community and the board collaborate on behalf of kids and their families. The Family Engagement division it's doing exceptional work amplifying family voices for student success. I'd be remiss if I didn't mention our incredible partners, NVALAS, NASA, each of our chambers, Workforce Connections, NWEA, Boys Town, community and schools, that's just to name a few.

John Anzalone:

However, some voices are still being left out, creating a sense of disconnect. As superintendent, I must celebrate all successes and I must take on all challenges, including those from our rural schools, which are currently underrepresented. Additionally, a culture of micromanagement is eroding and stalling our process. We also need to utilize and prioritize greater representation of our Black African-American Latino educators to better reflect and serve this diverse community, if in fact they are the most qualified. So how can we fix this? First and foremost trustees, it's about strengthening existing relationships, fostering transparency, and welcoming new partners to the table. When we lead with honesty and collaboration while we build trust which resonates across the entire district.

My relationship building with Washington State legislators has been a true grassroots effort. By forming the Legislative Advocacy Committee with parents, students, board members and staff, we elevated Camas's presence at the table just as I did here in CCSD, forging strong connections with our Nevada legislators. Last month I led a caravan of parents to Olympia. And while lawmakers, they don't mind listening to the sups, they truly hear our families when they share their stories. Thanks to this collective effort, we've secured over \$3 billion in education funding. It has been an honor to lead that charge. The relationships I've built in Nevada will be invaluable, especially as we enter bargaining season and navigate this current legislative session. My promise to you is this, I will engage our legislators on day one.

And lastly, I'm deeply committed to school safety. Pictured here with Frank DeAngelis, he's the retired Columbine principal. He keynoted a safety summit that I spearheaded bringing together administrators, teachers, students, law enforcement, legislators, and board members to explore ways to make our school safer. In the fall of 2022, when I arrived in Camas, I partnered with an AI company founded by former military and ex-law enforcement to integrate AI technology into our existing school cameras. This software detects potential weapons before they enter our campuses. To date, we've identified at least three weapons that could have made it onto our schools. Imagine that impact that this innovative solution could have for CCSD.

Having led four complex high schools across our valley and served as assistant superintendent overseeing alternative programs across the entire district, I've seen firsthand the power of community partnerships. Together we collaborated with St. Jude's to design and build the St. Jude's Healing Center, and with the Culinary Institute, bringing culinary arts to our academic centers.

Trustees, that had never been done before. It was an entirely new way of looking at student needs and behavior reform. And in Camas, I'm working with my team to develop a sixth through 12th grade project-based learning campus, expanding non-traditional graduation pathways for our kids. And this is just the beginning of what we can do together. When making decisions it's crucial to start by recognizing what CCSD is doing well, by looking at the data.

There is great momentum with our fourth and eighth grade students as CCSD students exceeded their peers in 21 urban districts. Six more magnet schools earn top honors and 41 receive national recognition. Principals have expressed to me that they appreciate the Tier 1 curriculum and early warning systems. There's also been a 7% decrease in chronic absenteeism, a trend that started under my leadership and continues today under Mr. McPartlin. Additionally, 140 schools have

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achieved three, four, or five-star status, with 17 schools advancing from two to three stars. And special recognition to Scherkenbach Elementary for a 29 point gain in a year, a jump from two to four stars. Unbelievable work.

However, and you know this as well as I do, there is much to be done. CCSD still faces widening gaps, especially with our multi-language learners, and high teacher turnover and student transiency, is causing a disruption to our stability. The 22 schools dropping from two to one star highlight the need for targeted intervention. As a former high school principal, I think what concerns me the most is the disconnect between our high school graduation rates and the low proficiency in ACT scores. We will need to ensure our graduates are truly prepared for their next steps. So to address this, it's time to craft a new strategic plan, a new strategic plan that brings the entire community together with input. Every decision should align with this plan. And trustees if it doesn't, we discard it. We simply don't have the money or the time to waste on things that kids don't need.

In Camas we've partnered with Cascadia Tech Skill Center to support students who may or may not be pursuing college. While here, I partnered with Tesla to offer real-world pathways and scholarship opportunities. And to support the strategic plan in Camas, I introduced inclusive work groups where teachers, admin, parents, and students work together to bring our strategic plan to life. It doesn't just sit on a shelf. Let me show you some examples of our success.

Our Smarter Balanced Assessment results, under my leadership our Black and African-American students, in math, shot up 14% in just this year alone, and four percentage points in science. Our Hispanic and Latino students increased 7% in ELA and 5% in math. And under my leadership, I'm so proud of these students, our students with disabilities, a point increase in ELA, but a 6% increase in science. I'm so proud of those kids and their teachers. Our high school graduation rates under my leadership have all grown in every single one of our high schools, not to mention our SBAC score as you look deeper in. Our multi-language learners, in math, have grown every year that I've been in Camas. I'm so proud of our ninth graders who are on track to graduate. This is our Hispanic group who have also grown each year that I've been there. And our graduation rate for our students with disabilities, six percentage points just this last year alone.

One challenge I wanted to bring up because of course it's not all perfect, I'm concerned about our fifth graders moving into sixth grade. We're feeling that a sense of belonging is missing, very similar data that we saw in CCSD when I was here and Dr. Scavell and I worked on town halls with our middle school kids to align them with an adult mentor, and we're doing similar work in Camas.

This is really what it's all about, those littles in their gowns to the bigs in their robes. That's the ultimate goal. The governor has been clear. The 11 of you have been clear. I've been listening. There needs to be a strong commitment to fiscal responsibility. I see this as a weakness that we can quickly turn into a strength. We know the district received strong financial support from our Nevada legislators. Proactive investments have been made in our innovative programs like the expansion of CTAs and the Workforce Blueprint developed by Workforce Connections. Overall, our principals tell me they do feel supported and systems are starting to align for their kids. However, we can't ignore the fractured relationships with our legislators. The pressure to stay competitive with surrounding states and not to mention the challenges posed by private and charter schools, all of which are impacting our enrollment and teacher retention.

John Anzalone:

The chaos around the budget could have been completely prevented with transparency and productive planning. Consistent collaboration is key to avoiding confusion, mistrust, and missed opportunities. Under my leadership we'll focus on open communication, strategic planning, as we ensure that we stay on track and avoid these challenges moving forward. Trustees, nearly every district in America is facing financial challenges, we know this. But over the last three years in Camas, I want to show you this. We have been forced to make 6% and 10% cuts respectively. However, we avoided the public relations issues and state oversight that occurred in CCSD. How? By communicating, planning, and working with the board, our principals and our budget committee every step of the way. And in CCSD, we'll navigate these challenges by publishing our detailed reports, prioritizing strategic spending, cutting non-essential costs, and conducting internal audits every single year. With transparency and strategic planning, we'll navigate the storm together.

I'll align resources with student needs, make tough decisions when necessary, and ensure stakeholders are engaged throughout the entire budget process. Like in Camas, I would establish a Superintendent's Budget Committee to ensure this collaboration. Our district and community became stronger and more united in Camas, not divided and torn apart. This type of collaboration will also address AB469 inconsistencies, build back the trust with our community, and re-engage with our legislators who have genuine concerns, and rightfully so.

To our parents, we will know and we will love your kids. They will learn to read early and learn math at and above proficiency. We'll create new opportunities working for and with our amazing business community like those I mentioned earlier.

To our legislators, we will not waste another dollar. We'll be quantifying the return on investment for every expenditure. We'll work hard for you and I won't let you down.

And to our business leaders, you will not have to look any further than our CCSD graduates. We will make you proud to hire each and every one of them.

And trustees, as you can tell, this is more than a job for me. This is a calling to serve the community that shaped who I am today. I believe in our district, I always have. I believe in our principals and our building leaders, our support staff professionals. And most importantly, I believe in our students. We have a lot of work ahead, but together we can do amazing things for kids. And as they say, nothing worth fighting for has ever been easy. And so from my family and me, thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you Dr. Anzalone.

John Anzalone:

Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

So just in our business meeting, for the general public, usually we don't clap or boo a candidate or any person that is actually presenting, so we're just going to maintain that respect. Thank you for

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

clapping because it is a big deal for us to pick the next educational leader for this region. So thank you for being respectful of our business meeting. So we're going to take questions from each of the trustees, put yourself in the queue to be able to ask.

Dr. Anzalone, our focus is to be on the presentation. It is to ask the question and then allow you the most amount of time to respond. Because there's 11 of us, I'm keeping it to a three-minute timeframe.

John Anzalone:

Okay.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

I will ask you to move on to another question if it takes too long to communicate the answer. But first I'm going to start with Trustee Barron.

Trustee Barron:

Thank you Madam President. Dr. Anzalone, thank you so very much for traveling back here to CCSD. A lot of things, of course, resound with me. You said that day one, you're going to reach out to our friends at the legislature, which gives me an idea. The first 100 days, what would the first 100 days with John Anzalone look like as our superintendent?

John Anzalone:

Thank you Trustee Barron. First 100 days is at schools and at the legislature. Those are the two critical things. My pathway here, over 22 years, I've grown to know our building leaders, our teachers, many of our support staff professionals. And I know some things have changed in the three years I've been gone. So there's still going to be visitations and meeting new folks. But the nice thing for me, Trustee Barron, is we don't need 100 days to listen and learn.

When I went to Camas, I did, I needed that time. It's not necessary here. So we can hit the ground right away. I want to have individual meetings with each of our senior leadership and cabinet members, but also schedule school visits right away and get to as many as I can. But spending that time, sharing that time in Carson City, whether it's on the phone, Zoom calls or in-person, will be very, very critical. Be reviewing our bills, seeing what's happening, what's moving forward, what might need to be killed because it's just not good for kids.

So I think between the legislative work and visiting our schools, that will be most critical just so I get to know what's going on hands-on. One of the things about being in a smaller district over the last three years after coming from such a large system is I've learned how to really roll up my sleeves and get to work just because you have to. So that's going to be a lot of fun getting back on the ground face to face with our incredible staff and our students.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Dominguez?

Trustee Dominguez:

Thank you, Madam President. Thank you, Dr. Anzalone. I know the process is very difficult, so I really appreciate you applying. I know it's difficult on the family. One of my questions is, you've mentioned in your presentation that staff sometimes feel excluded. I want to know how you're going to work to rebuild the relationships and to just foster that collaborative culture back with the staff.

John Anzalone:

Absolutely. Thank you, Trustee Dominguez. So first off, I think it starts with the SOTs. Our SOTs can be a really, really strong way for our families to have a voice. I was always very fortunate as a principal to have a strong SOT, a very collaborative SOT. So I love to visit as many SOTs as I can. It kind of goes twofold. One, it gives me a chance to meet with these families, these groups, staff and of course the principal, but also really dig in to see what the issues are at each school. Also, it's important for me to make sure that we have as many committees as we can, parent committees, employee groups. I truly enjoy that collaboration.

So for me, I would like to really take a look at who's on our current parent groups and see if it's a diverse group, and if not, reopen those applications, re-look at who is sitting on those and really find the voices of everyone across the district. To me it's really a two-fold between the SOTs that are already there, but also in opening up my office and opening up those avenues for more and more people.

That's my style. It's a very collaborative style and I really enjoy that work. Even if you're getting those tough questions, I actually really enjoy that. Really gets to see who's got their thumb on the pulse of the community.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Satory?

Trustee Satory:

Thank you very much. I thank you for being here. Thank you for your presentation. My question, you said in your presentation that you were making a promise of being a model of board governance. So I wanted to ask you a little bit more about that. Just in general, talk a little bit about your collaboration with your current board in Camas, what type of governance model you've worked with before and what you see as a working relationship.

John Anzalone:

Thank you, Trustee Satory. I will tell you this, I consider myself the sixth man. We have a five-person board, wonderful people, very engaged in the community. So moving to Camas, I was immediately really pleasantly surprised by their engagement and their professionalism and the respect and the trust they have in the community, and the respect and the trust they put in me. So we do a lot of events together. We like to do first Fridays downtown. When we have Saturday town halls, we do that together. So again, there's a bond there, there's a respect and there's a trust. My main focus is to never leave them blindsided. That communication with them is crucial. And I think

John Anzalone:

it's helped get me here today because as you may have seen, the first thing my board president said when I informed that I was applying and she said okay, she said, "That's a big jump, but you'd be crazy not to do it because that's your home, and we believe in you."

The entire board circled around me and said, "John, we're going to miss you so much if you go, but please take the skills that you've learned up here and how to really collaborate with a board and use that back in CCSD." So I think it would be exactly the same here, working together, making sure that I'm not blindsiding each of you, that our board briefings are thorough. Making sure that you're not being caught by surprise. To me, again, I see this as being the 12th man. I see myself sitting on that board working collaboratively with you day in and day out. I know that's the board governance model here.

And as I said, I believe a lot of people are watching. I think a lot of people are trying to figure out how this is going to work. We have 11 committed people here. You have to be, in order to do this week in and week out. You have a lot of passion for this community, so sitting up there with you, we can model that for our community and I think most importantly, for our kids because our kids watch as well. So I look forward to it.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Stevens?

Trustee Stevens:

Hi, there. Thank you so much for your presentation. You made a comment, you said that relationships with teacher unions will be fostered and rebuilt. Can you give us a blueprint of what that looks like for you, how you plan to do that?

John Anzalone:

Absolutely. So first and foremost, I know that our CCA specifically union, is that what you're asking, Trustee Stevens?

Trustee Stevens:

You mentioned multiple unions.

John Anzalone:

Oh, multiple unions. So first of all, with CCA, right now we know that we're going to go into a bargaining session very soon. It is going to be very, very important to make sure that I'm meeting with those bargaining leaders, executive leaders right away to build that rapport and trust, and ultimately knowing who our bargaining team is. I think those relationships are going to be incredibly important because once we sit down at that table, if we have the established trust, and most importantly, guardrails and guidelines, how are we going to communicate during bargaining? How are we going to communicate during the legislative session? That's critical because if one side is

John Anzalone:

thinking this and the other side is thinking that, and this is how we're going to communicate those rules of engagement, so to speak, are very important.

So I think it'll be important for me to establish those and establish those relationships. With our other bargaining groups it's the same exact thing. I mean it when I say that it's going to be important to show that we are willing to bring the best and the brightest here, and I'm willing to do that. And if that means central office and senior leadership having to reapply, I think that'll send a message that we mean business and we want the best here. So again, it's the same thing across the board. With each of the bargaining groups I have many relationships already established. It's just going back and leaning on those relationships so that we know as we move forward, there's a mutual trust there.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan?

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

Thank you, Dr. Anzalone. I'm just going to get to it. I'm going to talk about money. So we really hit a financial cliff with ESSER being gone. You mentioned in your presentation how you would allocate financial resources to prioritize classroom needs. Part of the classroom need is the teacher.

There's a lot of issues with the teacher's pay. There's a lot of issues with retaining teachers, there's a lot of issues with recruiting teachers, but also with the resources. What is your financial plan on securing that?

John Anzalone:

Thank you, Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan. First and foremost, it's important to look at the budget as a whole. We want to see where we may be spending money that we can pull back on, and particularly at the central office level and off of the school side. So my goal would be to keep any reductions that we have to make in order to balance the budget because my ultimate goal is to bring you a balanced budget. And in order to do that, we need to look at holistically, where can we pull back and save? And many times that is as far away from the classroom as possible. So my goal will be to streamline and become as efficient as possible away from the classroom so that we can put more resources in. I truly believe that that will send a clear message to not only our teachers, but also our support staff professionals, that they are valued and that what is happening in the classroom is the most important criteria and priority for us.

So again, it'll be from the outside in looking where we can reduce. Also, as we dry up ESSER funds, we are also dropping in enrollment, and that's of course our primary revenue source. So we need to make sure that we are competitive, that our schools can compete with the charters, the privates, and all the other entities that are really competing for our kids. And so again, it'll be important to make sure that our resource is in our schools so that we can compete against all of those entities that we have to share students with. Now, I truly believe that what's best for students is best for students, but I also highly believe that what we have here is competitive, is marketable,

John Anzalone:

and we have done an incredible job to offer those things. So that's where our resources have to be trustee. And again, away from the classroom is where we'll look first. I know I'm limited on time, so I appreciate that.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Biassotti?

Trustee Biassotti:

Thank you for your presentation, Dr. Anzalone. You mentioned that you'd make tough decisions when needed. Can you give us an example of when you had to make a tough decision that perhaps wasn't a welcomed one?

John Anzalone:

Absolutely. Thank you, Trustee Biassotti. This kind of piggybacks off of the last question. Most recently, again, we've hit 10% to 12% reductions in Camas, and that's not easy. Those relationships that have been built are questioned when you have to sit down across the table from someone you care about to let them know that they're not going to be with you in the fall. Ultimately, in order to get to that 10% to 12%, we had to start with central office. Those are people that are near and dear to me and work directly with me every day. And we looked at 29% of our cabinet were reduced first, and one of the hardest things to do is sit across the table from someone who you know in your heart doesn't deserve that. But you also know in your heart that by reducing that position, those funds are going back directly to the classroom.

And so there's an understanding, there's a mutual understanding, and it's hard, it's challenging, you lose a lot of sleep, but ultimately what I really was pleasantly surprised about was after those conversations, how those people came back the next day and went to work, knew what they had to do to serve kids, and they're going to finish out the rest of the school year with us. So those are hard decisions, but I think ultimately to provide a sustainable pathway forward, not only for Camas, but here for CCSD, I think that's really the ultimate goal. And again, to provide you a balanced budget, those decisions have to be made. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Henry?

Trustee Henry:

Thank you, Dr. Anzalone. Thank you for sharing the data of the student growth that happened. My question is, most districts grew since the COVID pandemic. Could you provide more insight into this year's growth compared to pre-pandemic levels?

John Anzalone:

Absolutely. Camas is a district that also declined, but not as tremendously as some of our larger urban districts. However, we've identified really four areas that we need to hone in on, and that's how we receive this growth. One is truly building a sound MTSS, a multi-tiered systems of support where our teachers are provided Tier 1 and Tier 2 systems and pathways for their kids. But I'll tell you, one of the things that I was able to do post-COVID in order to see that growth was we negotiated early releases for both elementary and secondary students. Early releases on every Wednesday for elementary and two times a month for our secondary students. What that did Trustee was that provided our teachers and our paraprofessionals opportunities to be together to PLC, but more importantly, truly dig deep into the data. So yes, we probably did see growth across the country in most districts, but I think ours was heavily related to the time that we provided our educators to work together to look deep into the data and provide those intensive supports for students who need it the most.

And that's why I think I mentioned that my most proud accomplishment has been those students with disabilities because COVID or not, those students tend to struggle the most. So really proud accomplishment for us.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Cavazos?

Trustee Cavazos:

Nice to see you again Dr. Anzalone.

John Anzalone:

Thanks, Trustee.

Trustee Cavazos:

You've outlined a strategic plan here for achieving the district's goals for our students. The people that have been left out many times has been the expertise of our teachers and our support professionals. How would you utilize the talents of our educators and include them in achieving those goals?

John Anzalone:

Trustee Cavazos, that's where it begins. It begins from the inside out. When we've sat down to start our strategic plan, there wasn't even a cabinet meeting to start that. The direction was to dig deep into surveying our teachers, surveying our community, and surveying our kids. Because the first step was to really identify where those needs were at the school level. It wasn't up to me to decide that. Once we gathered that information, that's when we had multiple committees, multiple meetings, with our staff, with our teachers, every stakeholder that we could. And that's how we came up with the three main overall goals. And more importantly, after that, Trustee, we began work groups of each of those collaborative stakeholders.

John Anzalone:

They meet weekly, sometimes bi-weekly, sometimes just monthly depending on the initiative. And I'm very proud of that work because not only is that happening in meetings, but then every single month there's a progress report and an action plan presented to the board. So just as much as our teachers and our stakeholders at the school, our community members are involved, but our board is involved every single step of the way, and they really, really appreciate that. I feel like it's brought our board really more deeply involved and engaged in the instructional platform within our district. So it truly, truly is a community effort. I can only take a tiny ounce of the credit, just really to get the charge going.

Trustee Cavazos:

Thank you.

John Anzalone:

Yeah, thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Zamora?

Trustee Zamora:

Thank you, Dr. Anzalone. You mentioned in your presentation about establishing a superintendent budget committee, and then you also addressed the SOT issues that we're having, transparency and everything. My question is how do you plan balancing both if you establish that to also respect that role, those members in the SOTs?

John Anzalone:

Yeah, great question. Thank you, Trustee. So I see those as two different entities. So our SOTs are established within the schools and they're working at that school level. What I'm looking for more in the budget committee is our labor leaders, board members, and also financial experts from around the community. I'm very fortunate to have two CFOs from industry outside of education on that budget committee. We also have parents who are not involved in any committees on any of the campuses. So two different entities working really simultaneously, but also independently. And to me, what that superintendent budget committee has done for us is it's provided considerations for me as the superintendent. What we do each month is we bring that committee together, we go through our budget, we painstakingly go through it, and it's all open, and our board members are there as well.

What I love about that is when we hit these snags or when we hit times where there may be a deficit coming or there may be a budget item that's questionable, it's all transparent. It's all open. So that way it's not just falling on a CFO or it's not just falling on a superintendent or the board is not shocked and surprised when these things occur.

John Anzalone:

So when you start that process from the beginning, by the time you get to the point where you're really proposing a budget to the board, so many hands and so many eyes have been on that, and it ended up becoming nearly a formality. That's the transparency and the collaboration I think that will prevent CCSD and us from going through that exercise again.

Trustee Zamora:

Thank you.

John Anzalone:

Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Johnson?

Trustee Johnson:

Yeah, thanks Dr. Anzalone for the great presentation. I had a question. I think I heard you break out your areas into four specific buckets, staff, community, strategy and finance, and then academics and data. I was hoping that you might be able to share the largest opportunity and threat for our academics, and then how you can address those, and then why you're best suited to help us navigate through that?

John Anzalone:

Thanks, Trustee Johnson. So first and foremost, I mentioned widening gaps for our multi-language learners, but I will tell you there's other areas there to address, students with disabilities, our underserved students. I also feel that there's a need for a cohesive ELA curriculum at our secondary levels. After speaking to a lot of our building administrators, they're very excited about Tier 1. They're excited about that alignment. But there's inconsistencies from school to school.

I know it's a large system, but I believe with the right goals and the right pathways in the right direction, we can bring back that consistency across all of our secondary schools. What it's going to take is buy-in. I would probably say that the best approach for this is going back to our feeder alignments. I found the most success as both a principal and an assistant superintendent when we worked closely with our feeders. Meaning, the high school is really the glue that holds our middle schools and elementaries together. We started one Vista. You've heard of OneHill. This started a trend that has faded out a little bit. So to me, that's where that threat is, is schools working in silos, principals feeling alone in that work. Bringing back the way we work as feeders is incredibly successful. We can really start to see movement if we're working in that alignment. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. I'll throw in a question. Dr. Perez, how many minutes do we have left?

Nanci Perez:

Five minutes.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Okay, another trustee can ask a question, so put yourself in the queue.

Dr. Anzalone, mine is on what you mentioned about proactive investments and innovative programs. What did you do in your current school district that you may want to try here?

John Anzalone:

Thank you, Trustee President Bustamante Adams. The first thing that comes to mind is a program called TK, Transition to Kindergarten. Very proud of this work. So we noticed, like many districts, that the students who are not having access to preschool or students who were identified as not doing well on the WaKIDS or the Washington Kids Exam to get into kindergarten, we really were at a loss on what to do with those students. So we came together and we presented legislation to actually invite four-year-olds into kindergarten, and we had it passed. Now, what we did was we started small, with just one cohort, and we had students, like I said, who showed that they were struggling or students with disabilities or students who didn't have access. It has been phenomenal. President Bustamante Adams, absolutely phenomenal ROI on that work. The students who had no access to preschool and had no access to TK, they were scoring 17, 18 out of 26 categories that they needed to show proficiency to get into kindergarten, or kindergarten readiness.

The students that took TK, unbelievable, it was 21, 22 categories that they were able to show proficiency in when they went to kindergarten. What that does is that sets up those students for life. That sets them up to read easily by grade three.

We are seeing those results time and time again. Working very, very hard with the legislation in Washington to continue this program. There's some political ties and there's some political rubs on this just because some legislators feel that it's a way to boost enrollment. Well, I don't see it that way. I see it as a true need. The data is clear that we're seeing these students successful. I'd love to see that continue and expand across Camas and across Washington State.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Barron?

Trustee Barron:

Madam President, I will see my question. He answered it before I could ask it.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Stevens, or actually Trustee Henry first.

Trustee Henry:

Thank you so much. I know that you mentioned when you were talking about communities, boards, collaborate and community engagement, and you said voices being left out. What strategies do you plan to deploy, especially for those most underserved, underrepresented, and overlooked communities?

John Anzalone:

Trustee Henry, good question. First thing I think of is some of the most challenging times here in CCSD and also in Camas is when we lose students. I think about that because I've lost students because they were not being heard. And to this day, I lose sleep over some of those.

First off, our underserved students, yes, we want to bring student advisory committees into our district, but I also want to make sure that we're hearing those who aren't being heard on their campuses, no matter what student group they're in. For example, I've learned over the years that there are students who have an online presence that we have no idea about. That they have lives outside of school that we don't know about, and if only we could tap in to what is making them tick, what's making them excited, but also the pressures that they're feeling outside of school. We need to bring those voices to light. We also know that many times the loudest voices are the ones that are heard. So we need to tap students. We need to tap educators. We need to tap our community members on the shoulder and not just wait for them to come to us. And how we do that is visibility.

I'll tell you, the more that a superintendent is visible, the more that a superintendent is out there at the parks, at community events, at evening events, meeting and greeting and listening, that's when we say, "Are you on any of our committees? Do you come to any of our school district events? Because I'd like to personally invite you. Here's my number, here's my email. Let's get together and do that." So it really takes the leadership to reach out and not wait for others to come forward. I've been very successful with that in both districts. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you, Dr. Anzalone. Let's give a round of applause and thank you for being here with us.

John Anzalone:

Thank you. Thank you, trustees.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. We are going to take a seven-minute break. It is 5:55. Please come back at 6:02. Trustees will be able to use the restroom facilities and then we transition to the next presenter. Thank you so much.

Recess: 5:55 p.m.

Reconvened: 6:02 p.m.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you for respecting our business meeting. I'm going to ask Dr. Perez to come back up.
Perez, please proceed. Thank you.

Nanci Perez:

Thank you, trustees. We will now start the second of two interviews for tonight. I think everything went very smoothly. The questions, and again, I'll have a timer and give you a five-minute warning. So without further ado, our next candidate is Jesse Welsh.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Welcome, Dr. Welsh. We're going to go ahead and have you present for the 20 minutes, and then each trustee, the 11 of us, hopefully will get to ask a question.

Our role is to be concise with the questions, to allow you the most ample time to respond. But we will limit that to three minutes so that we can all ask questions.

Jesse Welsh:

Super.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Please proceed.

Jesse Welsh:

Thank you, President Bustamante Adams and members of the Board, Dr. Jesse Welsh. I'd like to thank all of you for your time here and dedication to this search process. I know it's been a long time coming here, eight months, to set the road at this critical juncture. So with our time today, I'm going to walk through my SWOT analysis of the district, where we are currently, my initial focus areas, my fit with the superintendent profile, and then of course answer questions from you all.

So to inform my development of my analysis, I took a multi-pronged approach. I gathered information from multiple sources and listened to a wide variety of perspectives. Having been in the district, I connected with both former and current staff, support staff, teachers, principals, central office and others. I reached out to members of our community, including our employee labor groups, our municipalities, our community leaders, elected officials and other education stakeholders, and then of course, leveraged publicly available information and social media to gather more information regarding the district.

So I'd like to start with some strengths of the Clark County School District. First and foremost, we have a great staff who understand our mission to prepare students to succeed in a diverse global society. Our educators, our ESPs, our administrators and our staff consistently demonstrate their dedication to our students and go above and beyond. For years, the district languished without having a cohesive system of instructional materials. Leveraging our ESSER funds, we were able to secure quality instructional materials to increase consistency across schools and alignment of curriculum to standards.

Jesse Welsh:

With the high levels of [inaudible 01:05:06] that we have in the district and many new teachers, that consistency of curriculum has been a significant support to ensure a baseline of quality instruction. We've been continually touted for the success of our magnet schools and our CTAs. Magnet schools of America just recognized 22 of our schools for excellent, 13 with distinction and five for excellence.

We also just recently opened Northeast CTA and are opening our South CTA next year. Our graduation rates remain strong after achieving a high of 85.8% in 2019. We are slowly recovering and holding steady at 81.5% for the last two years. This speaks to the work that's being done by our high school principals and everyone in our high schools working with and getting to know each student. Our chronic absenteeism rates are also starting to stabilize, coming down from the high of 40.6% in '21, '22, down to 31.3% last year. That's the closest we've gotten to our pre-pandemic levels of 21.9%.

And finally, we've had a significant shift in the constitution of our board with four new elected trustees and our four appointed trustees. The board has already shown its ability to function at a much higher level compared to previous years, and is moving towards balanced governance, which is a significant positive. Simple actions have been taken to streamline meetings so we can spend time more effectively on what matters, which is our students, for example. I love that we've simplified the process so that we're not doing the Madam President members of the board Superintendent to your question, great move there. Love it. And I'm so heartened to have the voices of our appointed trustees on the board and have them be able to speak on behalf of our municipalities.

So while we should always celebrate our successes, we need to own our weaknesses and identify plans of action on how we can improve. Number one, staff vacancies continues to be a significant issue, particularly at our schools that need quality teachers the most in our urban core. We need to evaluate our systems and processes for hiring so that our speed is competitive with the market. Too often I've heard candidates give up because they've gotten an offer elsewhere, somewhere faster. I've heard of individuals who have volunteered to give their time, filled out the application, and never heard back.

We also have MOUs in place currently that limit the ability of retired educators to return back to teaching. We've suffered long and hard with transparency. Our community, our parents and guardians, legislators, expect us to be good stewards of the limited resources that we are provided, and to be open and honest about the actions that we take. Situations such as blocking public record requests, signing high-level contracts with our high-level administrators without them coming to the board, and releasing strategic budgets that require schools to make significant cuts without any cuts to central, greatly hamper our credibility.

As a district we've struggled with accountability. This includes ESSER funds being spent on glamorous trips, schools having to scramble when we failed to account for salary increases that were part of our negotiated agreements with our labor unions, and our increases in litigation costs. We closed Lundy without even having notified our community. For the last several years we've fallen short on targets from Focus 2024 without identifying meaningful next steps to reverse course and improve. And I think of it from a business perspective, if a business were to report to their

Jesse Welsh:

board and their shareholders that they missed a target, they would immediately identify the actions to be implemented that next quarter or next year and move on.

Over the last six years, the district has become more insular and communication channels have degraded. Superintendents office has unfortunately contributed to board dysfunction by not always ensuring that if one trustee receives information, all trustees receive that information, and in a timely manner. Our municipalities are frustrated with generic canned presentations that are not aligned to the needs of their community and the questions that they have. In the past, the district has done a much better job of meeting with our community members. A lot of those meetings have been curtailed, if not stopped.

As a parent, I receive the district's newsletter, and too often I see just some of the same topics in there. I feel like it's an opportunity where we could provide more meaningful ways for parents to get useful information and to be able to engage parents in the education process.

We have a significant culture and climate problem that needs to be rooted out and resolved, which is going to take some time. Over the last six years, there's been systematic retaliation against staff. Common phrases when I talk to staff are, "Keep your head down." Or "Don't speak up." I talked to one employee who, this past year after attending a public event in their official role, immediately had a supervisor at their door the next day wondering why they were there.

We need to rebuild our relationships with our stakeholders. This includes the Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Henderson, Clark County, and our rural communities. We suffered from a prolonged and unnecessary contract dispute with CCA, based on a false narrative that funds from SB231 were temporary. I have touched on some issues with the budget already as a weakness and while we have addressed some process issues recently with our budget development, we still have work to do in identifying and prioritizing available resources so that we can push them to schools.

The board's operational authority needs to be reinstated to ensure effective governments. Too many topics over the last few years have been deemed operational. Anything involving compensation must be brought to our board for approval, period.

Between employee retirement and incentives and turnover, we've had a loss of institutional knowledge that needs to be reestablished. We lost many leaders and have had significant turnover in critical positions, particularly in technology, operations, and budget. And while we have seen some modest gains, particularly in elementary mathematics, student achievement remains stagnant. We need to focus on our subgroups that are most at risk to bring them up to the bar.

When I left the district in 2019, 51% of our schools received a three-star rating or higher. That number is now 35%. With the quality instructional materials that we have in place, we need to begin letting teachers teach again and allowing them to develop proficiency in teaching that content and using those resources.

All right, that was heavy. It was. Despite some weaknesses, we do have some opportunities that if we leverage them properly, could help us significantly. First and foremost, our legislative session just started a few weeks ago and there are dozens of bills focused on education. We need to engage quickly with our legislators to provide meaningful input and help shape the laws and the funding coming out of this biennium. With the 2015 bond program sunset, we need to begin

Jesse Welsh:

working on the next bond program and prioritizing the needs for the next 10 years, in alignment with our partner Canon Design.

With student enrollment projections likely to plateau, we have a chance to focus on necessary repairs and modifications rather than responding to rapid growth as we've had to do for so long, and to reimagine some of our under-enrolled sites through innovative approaches. Our strategic plan Focus 2024, has expired and we're without a plan at this time. And while Focus 2024 was penned by a small few locked in a room at Sahara, we have an opportunity to do it right and engage our stakeholders and community in developing a plan that aligns with the expectations and needs of our parents, guardians, businesses, and our community. We're currently in contract negotiation season with our employee labor groups, and pending funding from the legislature we have the opportunity to increase quality staffing and retention.

Finally, our parents, guardians, community members and staff on SOTs are a meaningful untapped resource with hundreds of individuals that are highly engaged and committed to improving learning. By expanding opportunities for our SOT members to be further involved, we could increase two-way communication and the overall quality of district decisions.

Lastly, there are some emergent threats from outside the district that are on the horizon. There continues to be increased competition from alternative education providers, including charters, private schools, and homeschooling. Due to shifts in population, we're anticipating a drop of about 5,000 students over the next five years. We need to be proactive about providing our families with true choice and open enrollment, and making sure that our parents are aware of the quality options that are available within CCSD. When the district fails to be proactive, the legislature tends to get involved and create legislation for districts over 100,000 students. For example, there's a BDR in response to the district's actions with Lundy on outlining a school closure process. Federal funding through title grants, Medicaid reimbursement and food services represent a significant portion of our district revenue sources. Changes at the federal level have the potential to create an existential crisis for both us here in Clark County and the state. Inflation has caused construction and maintenance costs to increase significantly, and with inflation continuing to remain above historical averages, we are competing for limited construction bandwidth in the valley with weakening dollars.

Finally, the Nevada Department of Education and State Board have been working on updates to school start times. To date, we've been flat-footed on this topic. We could be a proactive partner to ensure that potential changes align with the best needs of our students and families and can be effectively implemented.

Based on my SWOT analysis, I've identified six key areas of focus for my initial reentry plan with the district. These include organizational culture and climate, hiring and retention, engagement with our students, parents, guardians, teachers, administrators, community municipalities, elected officials, engaging our stakeholders in the development of a strategic plan with annual SMART goals, evaluating our current systems, processes, policies and tools, and driving resources and decision-making to sites. I look forward to getting into more details of those specifics of the plan as I move through the process.

Jesse Welsh:

I greatly appreciate the work that the board and HYA, along with everyone in our community has done on the superintendent leadership profile. The fact that we had so many people come out and provide input, speaks to the level of engagement and interest with picking our next superintendent. From the profile, participants want a leader who can unify the district, drive transformational change and restore trust. Our next superintendent must make data-driven decisions and have a focus and urgency around student achievement, with a background of having worked in schools as a teacher and a principal. The superintendent must build collaborative relationships with everyone in the school community. The superintendent must have a strong financial acumen and direct resources to the classroom. The superintendent must have proven experience and success with a deep understanding of CCSD and of our state, and the superintendent needs to be a clear, transparent communicator who can speak with sincerity and intention.

I believe that my skill set and background and experiences align strongly with that profile. I have a proven track record of having worked with stakeholders. In Paradise Valley we embarked on a collaborative process with our stakeholders to develop a strategic plan and vision for the district. I have the experience of repeatedly coming into new roles in which the culture and climate needed to be turned around from previous leadership. And I've consistently worked collaboratively with our employee labor groups as superintendent in Paradise Valley to ensure that contracts were negotiated with fairness and with the bigger picture in mind, with groups working together for the common good of the district. I've consistently been a leader for transformational change. Many of the changes that I implemented in CCSD are still in place to this day. I worked through the process with Nevada Department of Education to simplify the teacher evaluation process for the NEPF.

Along with a great team, I led the largest expansion of magnet schools in CCSD history, adding 11 schools and 4,000 seats. I led the initiatives for online learning, implementing Canvas back in 2013, which we currently use, and I established our online credit retrieval program for high schools. Additionally, I took Google from just a pilot to being the productivity suite that is used district-wide when we moved away from Interact, those who might remember that one. To suggest that I consistently make data-driven decisions would be an understatement. Many of those who know me for a long time still refer to me as the old moniker when I was a coordinator, which was the data dude harkening back to my time working in the Northwest region with 61 schools. I've also had the privilege to lead the RC division, not once, but twice. Once as an interim superintendent in 2015, and then as the full-time superintendent in 2018.

My focus throughout my career has been consistently on improving student achievement as a math and Spanish teacher, dean, assistant principal, principal, coordinator, assistant superintendent, superintendent, and CEO. My background is in instruction and I've been blessed with success in every role, earning high, achieving four and five star designations at Escobedo Middle School, Thurman White Middle School, and at all nine of our current locations with Nevada State High School. I've been in education for 29 years, including 22 here in Clark County, and I've been in the role of a system leader since leaving the district in 2019. I'm extremely proud of the work that I've done throughout my career of building positive relationships with our stakeholders and empowering those voices to help shape positive decisions. In Paradise Valley, I regularly met with our employee

Jesse Welsh:

group leads, our United Parent Council and principals to share information and get feedback to inform district decisions.

With the challenges that we have had as the district with the budget, we need a leader with a strong understanding of the budget process and of state funding. My dissertation and research background is in school finance. While in CCSD, I worked with strategic budgets and helped guide the development of budgets annually when I was a principal and as a superintendent, assistant superintendent, excuse me. I regularly calculated additional allocations for the district, including region differentiated funding formulas and proficiency funding.

In my leadership roles at PV and Nevada State, I oversaw the budget development and approval process and ensured compliance with state reporting. I often quip that the budget is your fiscal representation of your priorities, and I consistently worked to ensure that the budget reflected what mattered most to our students. I believe I'm uniquely situated with a deep knowledge and understanding of the district and Nevada, but with ample outside experience and perspective to objectively move the district forward.

I was the lead on implementing the structure and development of the initial SOTs. I literally wrote the manual on the guidelines and process for the initial training efforts when AB469 rolled out. In Paradise Valley, I worked closely with our legislators to provide meaningful, timely input on legislation. And when I was in CCSD, particularly in my role at CPD, I regularly provided significant input on proposed legislation to ensure the best outcomes aligned with the intent of the laws, specifically helping with revisions to read by grade three.

So to close, while I believe there's a lot of work that we need to do as a district, I'm excited for the opportunity and the challenge. As one of the six finalists back in 2018, I believe I've only benefited from having the additional experiences outside of the district since that time, and I'm even more ready to tackle the challenges of the role. I grew up as a PK, a pastor's kid. I remember having red meal tickets as a free lunch student. I believe that education is the great equalizer for our students and that a strong education system can allow our children to fulfill their dreams. I taught, served as a principal, and was a district leader here in CCSD. Home means Nevada for me. I've supported the students and been a part of our community for over 20 years, and all of my children have either graduated from or are enrolled currently in a CCSD school.

I thank you for your time today, look forward to the next steps in the process as we select the 13th superintendent of the Clark County School District. [foreign language 01:22:26]. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Let's give Dr. Welsh a round of applause. We will now take questions from each of the trustees. Please put your name in the queue. Dr. Welsh, what we'll do is ask the question briefly and concisely to give you the most amount of time to respond. It'll be about three minutes total before we move to the next question. So Trustee Satory?

Trustee Satory:

Hi. Thank you. Thank you very much for that presentation and for being here tonight. Can I ask you a little bit more, you brought up a few times about the current culture and climate and the need to repair that, can you just speak a little bit more to that? What would be your top strategies or ways to really connect with the community? What would be some of the things that you would see right off the get-go that you would do to really get that buy-in and trust?

Jesse Welsh:

Sure, thank you, Member Satory. I think one of the first things is that leadership starts at the top, and so really making sure that my leadership team understands my expectations in terms of how we're engaging and having that filter down through what we do. I believe it also is incumbent on us in terms of how we're working with our employees. So working with our employee management relations group, making sure that the expectations are clear in terms of how we're engaging with staff, as well as engaging upwards and getting feedback from all those in our school and really hearing what some of those issues are and being able to solve some of those root issues.

Trustee Satory:

Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Biasotti?

Trustee Biasotti:

Thank you for your presentation Dr. Welsh. You mentioned our high school graduation rates have increased yet our proficiency rates have not. What do you think is the main reason, I know there's a lot of reasons, but the main one for that and what would you do to address it?

Jesse Welsh:

Thank you, Member Biasotti. I think one thing in particular that's important for us all to recognize, and I know this is a narrative that is out there very frequently, remember that the ACT is a measure of college readiness, whereas high school graduation is not necessarily that. That being said, I still think we obviously have work to do. I also recognize the fact that when we compare our ACT rates to other places in the country, we are one of the few states where every student takes the ACT, there are only a handful of states, I believe it's about five or six where that is the case. So sometimes it's a little bit of a challenge to compare those rates when you're talking of other states.

But more to that point, I think it speaks to making sure that we have one, the rigor of our instruction at the high school level as well as two, really making sure that all of our students at the high school level have the opportunity to participate in the most advanced coursework, and that we're pushing students to make sure that they're taking those courses as they get through high school and not taking that senior year off, as I often see. You see a lot of seniors there where they have a

Jesse Welsh:

schedule and it's just the four classes, and it's almost like a coasting year. I think we could do a lot better. That would help us to push our students a lot further.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Dominguez?

Trustee Dominguez:

Thank you Madam President. Thank you Dr. Welsh for being here. I know it's difficult on the family to run, and so I appreciate you putting in your application. You said a quote that you heard from staff is to keep your head down. How would you work to rebuild the relationships and to have a more collaborative culture with the staff?

Jesse Welsh:

Thank you, Member Dominguez. I think one thing in particular is it comes down to trust, and so we've got to rebuild that trust with our staff. I think in a lot of cases that's been part of the issue is people don't feel like they can speak out and speak critically of things. We don't improve if we're not listening to feedback, meaningful constructive feedback, and taking action on it. So I think that's certainly a big component of it. And then I think another piece is making sure that we have the systems, processes, structures, in place to be able to get that feedback in positive ways. I liken back to some of my experiences working here in Clark County and previously in PV. Working with families and working with our staff. Making sure that we have regular meetings with, let's say for example, all of our leads of our principals, our union leads. I had a group that we called Slack Superintendent Leadership Advisory Council, where I met with the leads for each of those different entities. It was really our opportunity to talk some shop and say, "What's really going on?"

So I think it comes back to building those relationships and trust and having those regular connection points to be able to be listening and be responsive.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan?

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

Thank you Dr. Welsh. I appreciated your brutal facts of our weaknesses. You hit, and you went deep. So I want to talk about one that you brought up about the loss of institutional knowledge. So what is your concrete plan? Because those are the gaps we've noticed with our budget situation and with other areas that we've learned lessons with some of our personnel.

Jesse Welsh:

Yes, thank you, Member Esparza-Stoffregan. A couple of things there. One, we definitely need a strong CFO coming into this role. Obviously, that's a big hole that we have and that's going to be a big focus when I'm coming in. I think another piece is again, in particular some of the areas from

Jesse Welsh:

what I've gathered in my analysis, technology is another big area where we've had some losses, facilities, operations, another big area, and so I think part of it is going to be assessing that talent that's there and then also looking to outside sources that may be able to provide us with some expertise to help rebuild some of those things. I could certainly get into more detail about some of the technology pieces, but leave that for another time.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Barron?

Trustee Barron:

Thank you, Madam President. Bienvenido, Licenciado Welsh.

Jesse Welsh:

Gracias.

Trustee Barron:

Of course, I've had a chance to read your resume and I couldn't help but notice that you built a new campus in North Las Vegas. I really thank you. I noticed in your initial focus areas, you're going to dig down deep on retention and recruitment, which I guess that's a big thing. Now, of course in East Las Vegas and North Las Vegas, I am very happy for the efforts that the district has brought to address this, but still, we are the communities who are least likely to have a licensed teacher in front of its students. Do you have any initial thoughts, any initial plans on how you could address this specifically again, in North Las Vegas/East Las Vegas?

Jesse Welsh:

Yes, thank you, Trustee Barron. Yeah specifically, part of it comes down to the incentives and the structures we have in place to attract the best talent to those schools. I think that's something we've been particularly flat-footed on is making sure whether it's through pay incentives or other types of things, to be able to get the best people. I think there's some other structure and process pieces in terms of how we do our hiring process. I remember back in the day when you got a call from the school district, this was a long time ago, you got one phone call and if you didn't pick up the phone and take that position, you were out, that was it. I think it's shifted too far the other way where people feel like they can cherry-pick and look for their best opportunity or at least what they think might be their best opportunity, and I think we need to make some of those places more attractive to people coming in.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Zamora?

Trustee Zamora:

Thank you Madam President. Thank you Dr. Welsh. My question is about Paradise Valley, yes, and the strategic plan. Can you talk a little bit about how you worked with your governing board? What was that collaboration like and how you all came together for that?

Jesse Welsh:

Absolutely. And just for the record too, for those who might be Googling it, Paradise Valley School District is not in Paradise Valley, which I know sounds weird. You'll probably look up Paradise Valley and think, wow, that's a really affluent community. I had none of that, just so you know.

To your question though, specifically, we had a very solid structure and process in place. We engaged with an outside partner to help us work through that development. Our governing body had membership on those key committees that were part of that process, so that as we were listening to our community and all of our stakeholders, they were part of that process there and helping to guide. As we started to hear those emergent themes and identify the things that we wanted to include, they were part of that to make sure that we were on the same page, and then bringing that back to the full board.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Stevens?

Trustee Stevens:

Thank you, Dr. Welsh. I was looking at your six focus areas, and one of them is evaluating current systems, processes, policies, and tools. How do you do that?

Under your leadership, what would it look like to make those evaluations? What would your process be and then how would you implement those changes?

Jesse Welsh:

Sure, thank you, Member Stevens. Well, I think working backwards a bit, I will say one thing is that I believe that we should be having the end in mind before we start with those new initiatives. I think that's an easy mistake to make that we make a lot of times in education, and I'll give a good example of that. We have policies such as our grading policies that are somewhat new, not that new I guess, at this point. We have our cell phone policy. We roll these things out, but we don't at the outset identify what the metrics are for success. How will we know if it worked? How are we checking along the way to see if things are working, and if they're not, to make those course corrections? So I think part of it comes back to building that analysis structure into new initiatives as we roll them out so that we're not coming back two, three years later and saying, "Well, hey, did it work?" "I don't know." I think that's a big piece of it.

But then more to your question, I think it means delving into the data on some of those pieces to identify, especially things that are already out there, like the cat's already out of the bag, we can't change that.

Jesse Welsh:

But identifying the data that we have to be able to see how things are working. If they're not working, what adjustments can we make, or if it's something that's just totally not working, do we need to scrap it and start over.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Cavazos?

Trustee Cavazos:

Thank you for being here, Dr. Welsh, nice to see you again. We've had a lot of different issues having to do with technology, ranging all the way from huge cyber breaches that caused a lot of anxiety, to something more in the trenches, like losing our site-based technicians. As the data dude, how would you assess what needs to be done and how would you go about making the changes that are needed?

Jesse Welsh:

Yes, thank you, Trustee Cavazos. Well, I think one big advantage we have is I know there are several folks within our community, including some staff that are not with us that have since retired, that would be glad to help lend some expertise on a very short-term basis to be able to look at some of those pieces. Just some of the things that I'm aware of that I know are issues, we know Chromebook refreshment is a big issue where that's something that's been now thrust upon the schools. Schools are now having to bear the burden of those refreshments that used to be something at the district level. That's going to cause some stress there. We need to look at that. I think there are still some pieces even from our cyber attack that I don't necessarily have a warm and fuzzy feeling about knowing that those have been resolved.

So being able to have some experts... Technology is the kind of area where if you don't have the expertise, you really can't fake it. So making sure that we have experts in those areas and leveraging that to be able to assist us to make sure that those things are resolved. So I would say really to your question, looking internally in terms of what we have, some of it is systems and processes that I know that we have had in place in the past, that my understanding have not necessarily been carried forward in getting those back into place. And then leveraging some outside assistance to help us to see from an outside perspective if some of those things that we think are solved, are truly solved.

Trustee Cavazos:

Thank you so much.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Henry?

Trustee Henry:

Thank you, Dr. Welsh, you dropped so many gems. I don't even know where to start. Okay, so you did speak to competition from charters and private schools and homeschooling, and also us having the opportunity to reimagine the school structures of those that are under-enrolled. Can you speak more about that and true choice and open enrollment?

Jesse Welsh:

Yes, absolutely. Thank you Trustee Henry. Big question. Lots of stuff there. That's good though, I like it. Yeah, a couple of things there. First of all, those of us here in the room, we're all familiar with COSA. We know what that means. I would venture to bet that if we walked out onto the streets and we said COSA to people, they wouldn't know what that means. I think we need to do a better job of really helping people to understand what that is and how parents can use that to opt into a different school if that's something that they're looking for, and truly make it an open enrollment process. When you talk about campuses being under-enrolled, back in PV, one of the unique situations that we had in Arizona, and I believe Trustee Cavazos, you probably remember this from your experiences there, the entire state is open enrollment, so any student from any district can go to any school in any district.

It gives some very unique opportunities, but there's some big challenges with that. So when I think about that, I think about the fact that we had to be very effective at marketing our schools and really identifying what was the niche of each of those schools. Every school has got some things that they do so much better than everybody else. Celebrating those things, helping to build those things up and helping to make sure that our community understands what's happening in those schools.

One other idea, which I think is a potential opportunity, and I thought it was just a really astute move in Paradise Valley, we had early childhood programs at a lot of our schools where there was under-enrollment and being able to utilize that space for some early childhood. Part of what was really exciting about that was it built an automatic pipeline for those students to remain in the district because if you're already attending a district school, you're not likely to move at that point. It was a genius move, in my opinion.

Trustee Henry:

Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Johnson?

Trustee Johnson:

Hey, Dr. Welsh, thanks for the presentation. Can you talk a little bit about the academic achievement? You mentioned the subgroups and the significant gaps within subgroups. Talk about some of the plans you'd want to put into effect to see meaningful movement in those subgroups in the first 18 months, and then 36, and then up to 60 months out.

Jesse Welsh:

Sure. Thank you Trustee Johnson. Yeah, it's a big issue. It's very easy to look at our aggregate data and feel like we're just doing okay there, but when you break it down and you talk about our IEP students, our ELL students, our African-American students in particular, the data shows that those subgroups are struggling. I think a big piece of that comes back to our resource allocation. We do have weights built into our state funding formula for some of those populations. Those are not always being accurately reflected in our strategic budgets. So making sure that we are pushing those resources equitably to our campuses, and then much to Trustee Barron's comment earlier, students cannot be successful if they don't have a quality teacher in the classroom. I think a big piece of it starts there with ensuring that our best teachers are in the schools where our kids need it the most.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. I'm going to insert myself to ask a question and then there'll be second rounds because we still have time.

Dr. Welsh, you mentioned your dissertation was on financial acumen. I think you said that. If you could just expand. What was the topic and how did you get to apply it?

Jesse Welsh:

You're making me happy. Everybody loves to talk about their dissertation. Inside jokes for everybody who's ever done a doctorate. So my dissertation was specifically using data development analysis to analyze the relative efficiency of Nevada secondary schools. Essentially, where do you spend your money to get the biggest bang for your buck? From that, in particular, things that I found from my research were putting programming in, and again, we're talking about middle and high schools, after school programs, in particular, was a big piece. Leadership at schools was very important. Those were two areas in particular where we saw that the finance that was associated with that had the greatest impact on achievement. So I think to that in particular, I think that is an area of opportunity for us, particularly at the middle level.

I can tell you coming from back East where I grew up, we had a lot more things that kids could get plugged into, particularly at the middle school level. I feel like that's where we lose a lot of kids. I don't think that the cost of some of those things is so exorbitant. We could have a lot more ways for students to get engaged at school that will help keep them at school. A lot of kids on those sports teams, that sport that they play is the reason they keep their grades up.

I think having more of those types of opportunities built in could be something that we'd be able to leverage, and it wouldn't cost us that much.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Esparza-Stoffregen?

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

Dr. Welsh, I want to ask you a very broad question because on the threats you had federal funding as a threat. We are in a time where it's very unpredictable.

Jesse Welsh:

Yes.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

I really want to know because you know that transformational leadership demands adaptable change to the times that we're in. So what would be your course of action knowing that we could potentially have cuts and all kinds of programming and services would be impacted?

Jesse Welsh:

Yes, I thank you. I'm an INTJ, planning is in our DNA. I think the first thing we need to do is to plan for those eventualities and already know ahead of time what we would do if certain things were impacted. If you see something on the horizon and you're not reacting to it, that's just poor leadership in my opinion. So I think just planning is the first piece of it to be able to identify what are some of those revenue streams that could be impacted and identify specifically what we would do if that happens.

I'm talking specifically about title funds. I'm talking about our food service through US Department of Agriculture and Medicaid. That's a big one right now. I'm sure you've probably even seen that in the news. We're the, I think, third most dependent on Medicaid funding out of all the states. So those are three areas in particular. I would look at where we have allocations in those areas and make sure we have plans in place to do as much as we could to be able to mitigate the impact of those cuts if that were to occur.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Barron?

Trustee Barron:

Oh, thank you very much, Madam President. I noticed that you mentioned as an opportunity, our relationships with our bargaining units. Of course, we know that our unions of course, are very much an important stakeholder in all this. They not only of course provide services to the public, they're members of the public. So can you talk a little bit about your relationship in the past or even in the present with the associated bargaining units?

Jesse Welsh:

Absolutely. So I mean just a couple of things, and some I think I've mentioned before and others I have not. My Superintendent Leadership Advisory Council that I had in PV, that was something where specifically I had the leaders of my bargaining units, so we would sit down with our principal leads, my teacher lead, my support staff lead. They didn't really have an administrator lead. They

Jesse Welsh:

were a vital part of my decision making. We met as a team because oftentimes those things that are impacting the district, those are the people you want in the room to one, help you problem solve. And two, if we walk out of that room having made a decision as a group, we own that message.

And I think that's a big piece sometimes too in that oftentimes the district makes decisions without the right people at the table. I believe strongly that as a leadership team, those that are involved in the decision, if you have the right people sitting at the table, we all walk out together, unified in that path that we take. So I think that's one big piece of it. There was a second part to your question I feel like I'm missing.

Trustee Barron:

I was so intent there. I already forgot it.

Jesse Welsh:

All right.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Is it Trustee Cavazos?

Trustee Cavazos:

I think so. Dr. Welsh, you're at your first presentation at the state legislature and you're there to talk to them about our goals for the district. What do you want to talk to them about? What do you want to say?

Jesse Welsh:

Oh, thank you Trustee Cavazos. I think first of all, highlighting some of what I've highlighted tonight with you in terms of our direction, our area focus. I think it's important that we talk about strategic planning. I know it sounds like a light thing perhaps, but truly a strategic plan is a way to set a roadmap for us as a district where it's very easy for us to see exactly what the path is that we're on. Another big piece as always in the state, comes down to funding.

I think that's where us as a district and again, working with our stakeholders, that's the part I think Trustee Barron, working together with our stakeholders to help advocate specifically for targeted revenue streams that could help increase funding in the district. We are perennially around 45th to 50th in funding per pupil when you compare us to other states. Despite that, we are right around average, actually. It's right around the low twenties or so in terms of our teacher pay for entry-level pay, our average teacher pay and our support staff pay. That tells me we spend a lot of time focusing on what matters most, which is trying to value our educators. But think of how much more we could do if we had more of those educators and the funds to actually do anything else other than be able to put those educators in our classrooms.

Trustee Cavazos:

Thank you so much, Dr. Welsh.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Stevens?

Trustee Stevens:

So you talk a lot about making decisions based off of data, which I think is great, but what do you do walking in day one and you want to make change, positive change and you go to look for the data and it's not there because there are plenty of areas I'm finding where we're lacking in that area. So what do you do to make as informed decisions as you can for the betterment of our kids, knowing that maybe that data that you're relying on is not there?

Jesse Welsh:

Thank you, Trustee Stevens. I feel like you've been secretly reading some of my files somewhere. I have a very detailed, again, I'm a planner, very detailed plan in terms of some of the data that I need that is not necessarily public information that I plan on sharing out with staff and getting as soon as possible to help inform some of those, number one, but much like you said, I'm not sure if all of those pieces exist. I believe that's where it comes down to making sure we have the right people in the room, the right structures so that we're meeting regularly with all of our key stakeholders and gathering that input so that we can make decisions and make decisions quickly. Having ad hoc meetings with people and trying to do things one-off, doesn't work. But when you have regular pathways for two-way communication, it makes it really easy to be able to essentially hit that circuit and be able to make those informed decisions, although I would hope I can get as much data as I can.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Johnson?

Trustee Johnson:

Dr. Welsh, you mentioned earlier, or at least in the initial focus areas, number six was that you wanted to direct more resources and decision making down to schools. That's not novel. It is happening today. What does it look like to do it differently so that it is more effective than it is today?

Jesse Welsh:

Trustee Johnson, I'll be very specific there. I think one, immediate action that we can take as a district. When I think about what's been happening with our strategic budgets in the last two cycles, both in September of last year and then January of this year where we've seen two rounds of cuts at the school level. Again, from my understanding of my analysis, there has been none of that happening at the central office.

Jesse Welsh:

It's not to say that everything that we do is not important in some way, it all is, but I can tell you when I was at CPD, we had budget cuts every year. It just happened to be one of those cycles where every year we were short money. So we prioritized cutting the things that had the least impact on the classroom and on students. We found innovative ways to do some of the same work that we were doing, but with less funds.

I'll give a simple example of that. We were talking about testing for the seal of biliteracy. Students have to pass a language test in order to earn the seal. We identified a cheaper test. We identified which students do we think are actually going to pass this test, let's make sure those students are getting it. Not necessarily somebody who may be raising their hand thinking, "Oh, I have a shot." It's like you've never spoke that language in your life. So things along those lines. So I think one action specifically that we need to look at is identifying any resources that we have at Central that we could help push to schools.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Henry?

Trustee Henry:

Thank you. In your initial focus areas, you spoke about the engagement with student, parents, guardians, teachers, etcetera. What processes or steps will you deploy to reach and engage those underserved, under-resourced and overlooked students and families?

Jesse Welsh:

Absolutely. Thank you Trustee Henry. Couple of things. One, it comes down to rebuilding some of the relationships that we have had and we've let lapse with our stakeholders and stakeholder groups, community groups. I mean, I'll give a good example of that. I was meeting with Yvette Williams not too long ago. Black Caucus used to have regular meetings with the district and then it just petered off. So simple things like that.

Again, it comes back to that meeting pulse as I was talking about, where you're connecting with people on a regular basis. I believe another untapped area is our school SOTs. One of the things that I thought worked really well in Paradise Valley was our United Parent Council. It was a group of essentially the parent leads from each of our campuses coming together. And it was an opportunity for two-way communication with myself and those teachers. We talked about all the big things and I answered questions and heard what some of the issues were. I believe our SOTs are an untapped resource in that respect, and I believe that we could actually have kind of like a super SOT, if you will, within each of our municipalities. If you did the whole district, it'd be way too big. But to be able to aggregate some of those voices and be more engaged at a ground level.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. We have two minutes left. I'm going to ask my question. Dr. Welsh, you mentioned decreasing enrollment, 5,000 students. What innovative strategies would you use to reverse or to increase our competition to attract those that are looking at us?

Jesse Welsh:

Sure. Thank you President Bustamante Adams. I want to point out one thing in particular that is important for everyone to be aware of. Part of the challenge that we have as a district, and it's not unique to us, it's across the country, is declining birth rates. We're seeing just smaller families. So that is part of the reason why we're losing students. It's certainly not the only reason, and I would say probably not the main reason.

So specifically to that, it comes back to marketing our schools. I know somewhat recently, at least the last couple of years, our communications department actually got a marketing team around them, but really amping that up, putting some specific profiles out there, helping to build up some of the enrollment at those schools through the open enrollment process. That's a big piece. And again, that was something specifically that we worked on in Paradise Valley, where we identified those schools where we saw the biggest challenges and that's where we focused our efforts.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Seeing no other questions, let us give a round of applause for Dr. Welsh and his presentation. We are going to take a five-minute recess to transition out. It is 6:51. We'll come back at 6:56.

Recess: 6:51 p.m.

Reconvened: 6:57 p.m.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you, everyone, thank you.

2.02 Superintendent Search.

Presentation and discussion with Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates, and possible action on the approval of the interview questions for the finalist interviews. **(For Possible Action)** [Contact Person: Irene Bustamante Adams] (Reference material may be provided) *(According to Governance Policy GP-3: Board Responsibilities)*

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

We are going to move on to item 2.02. We are not taking action on that item, but I don't know if we have any public comment cards. I don't think so. You did, David? Thank you. I don't see it, but Ms. Lisa, do you have his public comment card for 2.02?

Lisa Chrapcynski:

It was four point something.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Oh, Mr, you have a four point... Which item did you... Okay, for 2.01, it's not an action. We're not taking action, so we don't have public comment on that. So we're moving on to 0.202. It does say in the agenda for possible action, but we're not taking action. I'm going to turn it over to Dr. Perez to explain the process in this area. Go ahead, Dr. Perez.

Nanci Perez:

Thank you. So the next round of interviews after tomorrow are taking place on March 10th and 11th. The board will be interviewing on the 11th, with community engagement and involvement in the process on the 10th. For the 11th, the schedule that the board approved consists of 45 minute interviews for the individuals that the board chooses to move on to round two. And again, that's on March 11th. The purpose of this agenda item is to begin to work with the board at developing questions that they would ask during those interviews so that there is some continuity across the different candidates. Of course, any follow-up questions to the answers that candidates give from the questions that have been developed from the board are certainly acceptable and desired.

The 11 board members, just like tonight, if they each asked a question and it lasted for two to three minutes, you're talking about one question per board member, which would allow for the candidate then to have the opportunity to ask questions of the board, which is best practice. And so the purpose of tonight, there is no action, is to start to talk, discuss what questions the board would like to ask so that there isn't overlap, and so that we begin to prepare for the interview on March 11th. Again, that's not tomorrow, all the way in March 11th.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you, Dr. Perez. So each trustee, if you could be looking over the questions, these are just suggestions from our search firm. Also, we had previous questions from community members and trustees last quarter. So please look those over, pick your top one or two. These are just, it's a discussion. It helps to prepare us for tomorrow as we will finalize those questions. So please look those over. Dr. Perez, can you share what will happen tomorrow with the questions?

Nanci Perez:

What I was thinking we could do is that if the board members go over these questions, if they emailed me just individually, not to the board, their question or even two questions, should there be room for that, then I can consolidate them, put any that are like each other together. Then that would leave for secondary questions, right? If there is some overlap, then as a group you could look at those secondary questions and maybe choose from those. That might be the most efficient way to handle this and give the board time to look through the questions that were in the reference material tonight.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

I'm seeing some heads nod. So I think that that is appealing. So the direction is to email your first and your second so that you could consolidate and come up with a list. Trustee Cavazos, do you have a question?

Trustee Cavazos:

Yes, I have a question from the audience where there is a little confusion. I just want to clarify for the audience that what we're talking about right now is going to be for the second round of interviews. I think some folks are thinking that we're changing the format for tomorrow. The format for tomorrow is also going to be performance based on what the candidates present to us.

Nanci Perez:

Yes. Tomorrow is exactly the same as tonight. The questions that we are developing is for March 11th.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you for that clarification. Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan?

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

Thank you, Dr. Perez. I want to ask you about the time allotted for them to ask us questions. Could you give us a little bit of what that has been and what does that look like from past searches?

Nanci Perez:

So the questions can vary from the candidates to questions about governance, questions about your timeline, when do you anticipate making a decision? In this case, it's very public that's already out there. They may have questions about what your vision is in terms of restructuring. What do you think the role is or the possibility of there being a new strategic plan in place for next year? Anything that would help them make a decision as to whether or not this is the right fit for them.

I do think that in the case of Clark County, so much of it is transparent, given the open meeting laws. They know when the decision is going to be made. Even the salary and benefits are very transparent. So there's not quite as many, I would say, typical questions that I hear candidates ask. However, I do think they would ask some general questions about what you are looking for in a candidate.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan?

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

Thank you, I just had a follow-up to that. I have been getting questions thinking ahead about the community forum. So depending on who goes to the final round, when will we have an opportunity to talk about the questions that will be asked at those forums or will they be generated by you?

Nanci Perez:

The questions will be generated by the audience members. They won't be by us or by you. The idea there is that people come and they fill out a card and they're able then to give the card to the moderator and the moderator will ask the question. It truly is an opportunity for the community to interview the candidates.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

That's very helpful because that was the very question, that they would be able to ask their own questions and that the moderator would be the person to vet through the questions. Thank you for that.

Nanci Perez:

And just eliminate ones that are repeat, for example. But yeah, it really is an opportunity for the community to interview the candidates, and then to provide their feedback via the feedback form that will be available that night with a different QR code for the different candidates. You would literally go to one QR code to give feedback on that candidate and a different QR code for a different candidate.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Dominguez?

Trustee Dominguez:

Thank you. Thank you. Dr. Perez. I just was wondering what is the deadline for the emails that we need to send to you for our questions?

Nanci Perez:

So that's a great question. What would be reasonable? So I have to get them to Mr. Caruso by 3:30 to be uploaded as additional reference material for tomorrow's meeting. So my deadline is 3:30, so let's back that up and give me... I think I can do it in... What?

Unknown Speaker:

12 noon?

Nanci Perez:

12 noon I think is great. I was going to say I could do it in two hours, but that gives me a little bit even more space. So 12 noon would be great.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

And I see Mr. Caruso's eyebrows going up, so I think that's a good thing.

Nanci Perez:

He said, "no."

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

No, he said yes.

Nanci Perez:

He said yes? Okay, thank you. I'm learning about his deadlines.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Trustee Zamora?

Trustee Zamora:

Thank you, Madam President. Going back to Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan, she mentioned about the community questions, there's going to be a card. I thought I had remembered that the conversation was going to be that we will also have a Google form for community to submit questions beforehand, so we're able to give time to your team to also filter them and make them more concise. Is that still the plan?

Nanci Perez:

We did discuss that and that absolutely can be the plan. I defer to the board. But yes, the plan was that we would have on the website a form for questions, maybe for people that aren't going to show up but are going to watch it, for example. So we can absolutely do that as well.

Trustee Zamora:

Perfect. Because I do worry about the folks who cannot show up. We're in Las Vegas, it's a 24-hour city. We don't have a regular work schedule. So being a little bit more accessible for those folks. Thank you.

Nanci Perez:

And we liked that better than the on-demand questions, meaning coming in as the event was going on. That's where we moved to the beforehand because we thought, well, the people who are there can fill out the card for those that are not there for the community portion. It would be better to get the questions beforehand. So they weren't rolling in and us trying to do that in real time. So we'll make sure that that is still the plan.

Trustee Zamora:

Thank you. And I have another question. I know this is going to be streamed, I believe, and it's also going to be recorded. When it's recorded, where will that be posted? Do we know yet?

Nanci Perez:

So the only one that will be streamed and recorded will be the community group giving some more intimate scenario for the parents and students and staff.

Nanci Perez:

The one that will be recorded and live-streamed will be the community group. That recording will probably be in the place that it currently exists now, which is your EDU vision. I would think that that would be the best place. We could also put a link to that on the superintendent's search page.

Trustee Zamora:

Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

I'm going to invite our board liaison to come up and just add some context for that.

Joe Caruso:

Thank you, Madam President. So trustees, I just want to remind you that that's not on the agenda item right now, so we should not be talking about that. The agenda item is for discussion and possible action on the approval of interview questions for finalist interviews. Tomorrow night's agenda will be the community forum.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you so much. Trustee Barron?

Trustee Barron:

Actually, Madam President, it's not that late yet. I did it again, Madam President, because our board liaison pointed this out, I'd rather defer my question for tomorrow.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you so much. Trustee Biassotti?

Trustee Biassotti:

And just to reiterate on what you mentioned with the forum and the open questions, the moderator will not be vetting or [inaudible 02:09:49].

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Oh, that's okay. Trustee Biassotti, that'll be for tomorrow. We can have that conversation on the forum to make sure we answer all our questions. We may do some pre-training as well to help us to make sure that we have an understanding of what we're voting for tomorrow.

Trustee Biassotti:

I was just piggybacking off of what my colleague said with a moderator. I just wanted to clarify that there was no vetting in the questions with the moderator.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

We can discuss that tomorrow. But yes, please, I'll write that down and make sure to bring that up as well. Thank you so much. Okay, see no other discussion for item 2.02.

Upcoming Meeting of the Board of Trustees

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

I'll go ahead and move item 3.0. The next meeting of the board of trustees is Tuesday, February 25th, 2025 at 5PM, here in the boardroom.

Public Comment on Items Not Listed as Action Items on the Agenda

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Next we're going to move on to public comment 4.01. This is an opportunity for the public to come before us. I don't think I have the speaker cards though. Oh wait, there is one person that called in and got on the list and that is Diane O'Connor. Please proceed.

Public Hearing

Diane O'Connor:

Thank you so much. My topic is about Bob Miller Middle School, which is in Henderson in Green Valley. The purpose of me speaking today is we've as a community, have been having discussions with the school and our HOA regarding the safety of the children in the area. They've been using our street and our community as a pick-up and drop-off. Our community was built in 1996, so prior to the school being built. I believe the school was built about 25 years ago. The area has been heavily impacted with traffic that parents have been using as an alternative to a drop-off and pick-up. Our community, for the past 10 to 12 years or so, there are more and more families using this area for a drop-off and pick-up. One of the issues that we are concerned about, originally the area was built to accommodate 55+ homeowners, and recently there are more families purchasing homes there, myself included. And with that, we are crashing almost daily with these families dropping off their children.

So I'm dropping off my child uphill out of my area, and they're dropping their children there, so I can't even get out of my driveway. There's also an elderly facility across the street. In some given time, they've had emergencies where some of the residents have heart attacks or they have a medical emergency and EMS is trying to get there, there are parents blocking their driveway.

Also, trucks that are trying to deliver mail, mailman is trying to deliver mail, they're blocking their mailman. They're blocking the truck that's picking up our trash. Also, there are children on bikes,

Diane O'Connor:

E-bikes, scooters. The kids who are trying to walk, the parents are actually getting in the way and making U-turns in our driveway and colliding with the kids. One parent actually ran over a child's foot and had to get out of the car and tried to check the child instead of being a responsible parent and taking action and making sure that that child got medical attention. They got in their vehicle, proceeded to leave, and that child hobbled to school. That shouldn't happen. I'm not here to take sides. I'm here to ensure that these kids are getting to school and home safely. It's a responsibility of the parents. It shouldn't be my responsibility.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you, Ms. O'Connor. David Gomez and then Anna Binder.

David Gomez:

David Gomez, Nevada Peace Alliance President. I wanted to point out some things that I'm pretty sure there's indicators that tell people that I might be an extremist, especially when it comes to God, to my father. I'm always going to be extremist for my father, but there's also indicators in what I do to find out exactly what people say and why they say it. When a person says that homeschool is a threat, I worry about that. I understand how people perceive what is being said, but you have to look beyond the lines of what is being said. I'm not a threat, if I choose to homeschool my child, against CCSD because my business still pays the bond. A bond that I didn't agree to pay. And if you want to see the Clark County letter, I'll bring it to you so you can look and see exactly how much I'm paying every time I pay this bond, for every single business in that area, and I get tired of it. I'm a shareholder. I get told we're shareholders. I'm the first one to even say those words a long time ago. And as we look at this, I don't never want to be called a threat, especially when it involves my children. I choose and I pick how I want my children to be educated. If I choose homeschool, I choose homeschool. If I choose private school, I choose private school. If I choose charter, I choose charter. That's okay. But that just means we need to get better at some things so that I feel comfortable as a parent keeping my children here.

So at this point, my children are currently in Clark County School District, but I don't like to be called a threat in a different way if I choose to homeschool. Some of these trustees knows what it's like to be called a threat, so be very cautious when you're thinking about some of the things that some people say, and then they co-mingle the words very subtly.

Threat, shareholders, I want to implement, community engagement, can't be none of that if you're a threat. You're an opposite. So when I look at situations, I'm not too happy with what I read publicly.

When superintendents get let go and public boards don't want to tell you exactly why. When they've got to call 911 on parents or protesters or people outside, this is transparent Nevada. Are you kidding me? Do you not know that if you get paid by the state, your income is there? I'm pretty sure she knows this. Teachers, different people, staff members, governors, police officers, it doesn't matter. What are you going to do, call 911 on everybody? We're going to start this over again? We're going to start having people have arrested inside the boardrooms because they agreed to disagree, but disagree with their feelings. I'm sorry. And then, [inaudible 02:17:40] thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you, Mr. Gomez. Ms. Binder? Okay, thank you. Then Chris [Inaudible 02:17:51], and then Mr. I believe, Joseph Butler.

Anna Binder:

Thank you Madam President, members of the board. I first attended my first school board meeting 46 years ago here, aging myself. But I just want to tell you, sitting in the audience tonight, I want to thank you. Something has changed and it means your leadership has started to change. No one has rolled their eyes. Everyone is thinking, asking, thoughtfully. Thank you. It made a huge difference. And I think that's going to set the tone for revitalizing this district and the culture that's been there. I just wanted to say thanks for that.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you so much. Mr. Butler, and then Abraham, you're next.

Joseph Butler:

Hello. Thank you for your time, Madam President. My name is Joseph Butler. I have been in Las Vegas since I was about seven years old. I'm from Pine Bluff, Arkansas, and I've been in the school district, so I personally experienced this school district. It's been a pretty good time. You can't complain. I've been out of school for some time now. I graduated from El Dorado High School at the time Dr. Anzalone was the principal there. I was going through some hardships. I was actually going to Sierra Vista and found myself making different choices. I was an athlete for pretty much the whole time. I found myself making some different choices as I got older towards senior year, and as a result, I went to jail. At the time I had went to El Dorado High School, just trying to clean my life up and trying to make sure that I continued on with my educational pathway.

So I went to El Dorado, went to jail, came back to El Dorado, and I didn't know what to do. My hands were very, very much tied. I thought I wasn't going to be able to walk the stage. I had to work very, very hard to graduate. I didn't really have too much familial support. My mom, she's a single mother, she's working a lot. So it was really just up to me and the people who I met along the way, teachers, principals, and counselors, to help me get the education and help me get to where I wanted.

After being locked up and getting back to El Dorado, I had maybe a day or two before the school year was up, maybe a week or so. It's been a minute. So they were like, "Well, I'm not sure what you're going to do, but you can't walk the stage."

And I'm like, "I don't know. I don't know. I worked too hard to not walk the stage. I have one credit missing." That's when Mr. Anzalone approached me and he was like, "Well, luckily for you, and luckily for me too, I've been thinking about a program for the kids like you, who have been struggling, have wanted to come back and do better." He put that together for us. We spent some time in the library over the weekend just making up a credit. He brought together a lot of teachers and counselors and made a real push for the last bit of kids to graduate that year for El Dorado. And I really appreciate that and it really makes me feel comfortable.

Joseph Butler:

It really makes me feel good having somebody like that in the school district, especially now that I have a kid that's in the school district, going through the school CCSD. It makes me feel really good to have somebody like that overseeing things and being a part of the school district who cares about the kids so much.

Kids come and go through the school district. Kids come, they grow up and more kids come along. It's hard to find people that really care about one person so much as to go out of their way to make such a change and make such a difference in multiple people's lives. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you, Mr. Butler. Mr. Abraham?

Abraham Camejo:

Hello, I'm Abraham Camejo, for the record. Thank you guys for putting this interview together. There is a change on the board. I don't think I'm the only one that can see that. I agree with Chris G, it feels nice. The atmosphere feels good. What I do want to talk about is about the Henderson Cowboys playing at the Silvestri Middle School. I wanted to provide an update. The team coaches were able to meet with the principal. We were able to figure out a workable agenda to practice. So I wanted to provide the update because I couldn't bring all the kids here. They spoke very well last time. So right now, those kids are about 300, almost 400 kids playing at the park right now. And so I just wanted to echo a message that they wanted me to share with you. And they said thank you.

So they were able to meet with the principal, figure out that schedule. We still need some work with the Parks and Rec on the side of this. Silvestri is just one of many shared parks that we use in the school district. So I just wanted to say what the kids told me to say, thank you because they playing football and they're getting ready to win another winning season. And that's it. Thank you so much.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you so much. With that, that ends our public comment.

Adjourn: 7:24 p.m.

Motion to Adjourn.

Motion: Cavazos Second: Zamora Vote: Unanimous

Motion passed.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

We'll move to item number five. I will entertain a motion to adjourn. Trustee Cavazos?

Trustee Cavazos:

Thank you Madam President. I would like to make a motion to adjourn. I'd also like to thank Dr. Nancy Perez for providing us with some extra help tonight, some extra training before our meeting

Trustee Cavazos:

tonight, and our board president for initiating that training. And I just want to congratulate everybody on the board.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Zamora?

Trustee Zamora:

Thank you Madam President. I will second the motion, but of course I have to make my announcement of Nevada Week starts next week, so make sure you sign up. Nevada Reading Week is next week, so sign up. Thank you, everyone I will adjourn. I will second that motion.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. I have a first and a second. Please cast your votes. That motion passes 7 to 0. The time is 7:24. Have a good evening.