

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

Tuesday, March 11, 2025

5:03 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:

Dr. Perez, just quickly, in our reference material, can you tell us where the questions, which tab? Oh, it's on Tab Number Reference L, the last page, and it's by the name of the trustee. Thank you. Okay. Good evening, everyone. We're going to go ahead and get started. I am President Irene Bustamante Adams, and I call this special board meeting of March 11th, 2025 to order. The time is 5:03 PM. I would like to remind everyone to silence your electronic devices. We acknowledge that the land on which we gather is the territorial homeland of the Nuwu-the Moapa Band of Paiutes, and the Las Vegas Band of Paiutes.

Flag Salute

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

For Item 1.01, for our flag salute, Trustee Biassotti, please lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

1.02 Adoption of the Agenda

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

Motion: Barron Second: Dominguez Vote: Unanimous

Motion passed.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Before I open Item 1.02, are there any speaker cards for public comment to come forth?

Okay, just double-checking. Seeing none, then I will go to Item 1.02, adoption of the agenda.

Trustee Barron, would you like to make a motion to approve the agenda?

Trustee Barron:

Thank you. Madam President. Yes, Madam President and members of the board, I would like to make a motion to adopt the agenda with the following changes we had, noting that additional reference material has been provided for Item 2.02, superintendent search.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. I have a first from Trustee Barron. Is there a second? Trustee Dominguez.

Trustee Dominguez:

I second the motion.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. I have a first and a second. Please cast your votes.

That motion passes seven to zero

2.01 Closed Meeting.

Pursuant to NRS 241.030 , possible action to enter into a closed meeting to consider the character, alleged misconduct, professional competence, or physical or mental health of the candidates for the position of Superintendent of Schools , Clark County School District. **(For Possible Action)**
[Contact Person: Jon Okazaki] *(According to Governance Policy GP-13: Closed Sessions of the Board)*

Motion to not go into a closed session

Motion: Barron Second: Esparza-Stoffregen Vote: Unanimous

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Next we will move on to 2.01. Is there any public comment cards? I have some here. Just one?

That's it. Chris Giunchigliani, please come forth.

Public Hearing

Chris Giunchigliani:

Chair members of the boards, the committee, Chris Giunchigliani for the record. I just wanted to take a moment to say thank you for agendaizing this for your closed-door session correctly. I did file an open meeting law that does what this does, so I want to thank Mr. Okazaki and the chair for putting the agenda in the correct manner. So thank you very much, and I'm happy if you're going to continue to do it the right way, I'm happy to call the Attorney General and ask them to just not waste everybody's time on this. Okay, thank you very much.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you so much. Seeing no other public comment, then we will go into discussion and then we will take a vote. I do want to say that for this closed meeting, pursuant to NRS 241.030, this is for possible action to enter into a closed meeting to consider the character, alleged misconduct, professional competence, or physical or mental health of the candidates for the position of superintendent of schools, Clark County School District. This is also in accordance to our governance policy, GP-13, closed sessions of the board. With that, is there any discussion on this item? Trustee Biassotti.

Trustee Biassotti:

Hi. Thank you, Madam President. I do want to state this. I want to be very precise with my words and very conscious of everyone's time. So I just wanted to say this regarding that. I would like to make a motion to amend this item from a closed session to a public one. Given the ongoing trust issues within our school district, I believe it would be a meaningful gesture of good faith to prioritize transparency in this process. Holding a closed meeting so close to our vote may not reflect well on our intentions. I understand that discussions on competency and character in a public forum can sometimes be uncomfortable, but in the interest of transparency, this is a step worth taking to help rebuild trust with the community. Furthermore, I believe that the NRS, particularly in this case, refers to situations involving current employees rather than potential candidates. Therefore, I do not believe that the exception under NRS 241.030 applies in this scenario. For these reasons, I urge us to consider making this session open to the public to demonstrate our commitment to transparency and accountability. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. I have a first. Do I have a second? I have people in the queue, but I'm not sure if that means second. Trustee Cavazos?

Trustee Cavazos:

Thank you, Madam President. I am in the queue, but not for a second.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

I'm sorry. I was listening to someone else. Can you repeat that for me?

Trustee Cavazos:

Most definitely. I'm in the queue, but not to make a second to the motion.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Barron?

Trustee Barron:

Yes. Thank you very much, Madam President. Actually-

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

And Trustee Barron, I'm looking for a second.

Trustee Barron:

No, I do not want to second this.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

I will keep you in the queue. Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan?

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

I will not second.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Okay, so I do not have a second. So then we are going to continue with discussion. Trustee Barron.

Trustee Barron:

I will cede to the-

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Sorry, in my queue. Trustee Cavazos, I see you a second, but either, it doesn't matter-

Trustee Barron:

I'll cede to her.

Trustee Cavazos:

Thank you, Madam President. In beginning with this discussion, can we give the public, other than what is listed on the agenda item, may I ask board counsel to weigh in with a general description?

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Yes, you may. So, legal counsel.

Jon Okazaki:

Thank you. Jon Okazaki, general counsel. The only other information I can give you is that this is to review background material of the applicants. The reason why it's up promotion to go into closed session is because background information contains private, personal, and sometimes confidential information that cannot be made public. So that's the reason.

Trustee Cavazos:

Thank you, Counsel. And Madam President, would we be able to give our constituents an idea of about how long, if the motion passes, when we get to that point, of how long we would be gone for their convenience and out of respect for them?

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Yes, Trustee.

Trustee Cavazos:

Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Trustee Barron?

Trustee Barron:

Yes, thank you very much. Yes, this hiring, as a course, and although I've been in the hiring of a couple of city managers, three of them actually, this one, of course, is something that's totally different. When we look at the deep dive into the background of these individuals, I do not need to see, quite frankly, what effective teachers they were, because they wouldn't be here had they not been effective teachers. They wouldn't be here if they were not effective administrators. I don't need to see other things that include their credit reports. We had a very thorough search, a very thorough background that was done by HYA into their character. They did deep dives, of course, on their social media presence. I don't think I need to see anything that the rest of the public doesn't need to see.

I like to gauge people on what they have delivered to prior employers. I like to see how they talk on their feet when they're asked questions. I like to see what their thoughts are on what this school district, what our needs are going forward, and how they think they can match up with those needs. I would actually make my own motion to not go into a closed session to discuss the background. I very much trust the HYA search firm and what we paid them to do, which was to find us the best candidates. And I don't need to go into their deep dive, and I don't need to know about their neighbors. I don't need to know about their credit report. I don't need to know about their political affiliation or anything like that. I think we have the people who we have. And these reports, they don't always reveal everything anyhow, so I'd like us to go to the same information that the rest of the public does. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. So I do have a motion on the floor to not go into closed session, and I'm looking for a second. People in the queue. Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan?

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

Yes. I will second that motion, but I want to preface and give some discussion on my own on that. What I really want people to understand and acknowledge is that we did pay the search firm to do the deep dive, and I would like at this time for Dr. Perez to come to the table, because I want to hear just a statement about a summation before... Is that permissible, for us to have a general statement from her?

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Does anybody have any other questions? So I will ask Dr. Perez, go ahead and take your seat. Trustee Dominguez?

Trustee Dominguez:

Thank you, Madam President. I do have more questions for HYA.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Okay. Trustee Henry?

Trustee Henry:

No questions at this time. I was going to second.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Okay, so Dr. Perez.

Nanci Perez:

Thank you. Nanci Perez for the record. The trustees agreed to do formal third-party investigative background checks on each of the finalists. There is sensitive information that would be deemed confidential, such as credit reports, Department of Motor Vehicles information, university and academic program information, et cetera. And so that information, per counsel, should not be made public. We have done the third-party investigative background checks on each of the candidates, and we continue to bring the candidates forth to the trustees for their consideration.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you, Dr. Perez. Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan?

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

So I want to clarify. The reason that I'm seconding that motion is to weigh into the fact that we may have a disadvantage with some of our candidates, and here's why. We have two internal candidates that we may have access to personnel information, and we have one candidate that we may not have any personnel information. So my concern is that if we go into a closed session, we are not given fully the big picture of all of the candidates, which would be biased. So this is why I am trusting HYA to say that maybe they are having no concern. And it is a difficult, delicate balance, which I know we are moving towards balance in governance in all that we do. That the public is expecting us to bring forth individuals that have integrity, credibility, they would not be in this space, in this place, and nor our finalists at this time if there were major red flags and concerns. And it's why I'm seconding that motion.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Dominguez?

Trustee Dominguez:

Thank you, Madam President. I did see Dr. Perez raise her hand. I didn't know if she had a comment.

Nanci Perez:

I just want to make it clear that we are not privy to the personnel records of CCSD, and I am not commenting or weighing in on any personnel records.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you, Dr. Perez. Trustee Dominguez?

Trustee Dominguez:

Thank you. Thank you, Dr. Perez. In regards to HYA's background check, what does that include? I know there's certain criteria. What does that include?

Nanci Perez:

It includes a-

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

And Dr. Perez. I just want to pause there. Just for the audience, we have four newly elected trustees, and we had gone through this process last quarter before they were actually put into their positions by their constituents. So thank you for the question, Trustee Dominguez. And it's a good reminder of what we had asked in the previous quarter.

Nanci Perez:

Thank you. The background checks include a personal profile summary, i.e. all locations where the applicants have lived in the past. Social Security trace, a county criminal record history, a federal criminal record history, a county civil record history, a Department of Motor Vehicles license information, education and degree verification, a full credit report, investigation of all aliases identified within the past seven years, investigation of all jurisdictions of residence, education, and employment within the past seven years, university and academic program accreditation, national criminal record history, national sex offender search, news and media review, and a social media review.

Trustee Dominguez:

Thank you, Dr. Perez. Was there anything alarming you discovered in the HYA background check?

Nanci Perez:

Those comments are always relative, but I will say that we continued to bring the candidates forward to the trustees.

Trustee Dominguez:

Thank you. And if I could give just a point of information from my fellow trustees. As previously on a hiring board in the Air Force, this whole open meeting law, this whole open discussion is very different than what is done in the real world. So typically, when you're hiring someone, especially someone that's going to be someone else's boss or a commander, it's done behind closed doors. And so this kind of stuff is very odd, but now that we are kind of in a public setting, we're in a different realm because we have to make sure that we are representing our constituents, but also making sure that we have utilized the services that we're paying for. So I just want to make sure that our trustees here make sure that they understand that we've paid for these services, and we don't necessarily need to see what's on those reports, whatever may have occurred, but I think that we've paid for a service and we should utilize that service.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Cavazos?

Trustee Cavazos:

Thank you, Madam President. And just kind of sum up what my colleagues have just been asking, Dr. Perez, if I were to ask you, does HYA stand by these candidates, as we are here today?

Nanci Perez:

With the information that we have in the background checks, we continued to bring forward these candidates as viable to the trustees.

Trustee Cavazos:

Thank you. Dr. Perez.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Trustee Biassotti.

Trustee Biassotti:

Thank you. My intention was to uphold transparency, recognizing, acknowledging that this is a public forum. So I want to continue in that process. My question is, the motion that I made, what is the difference between that one and the one that Trustee Barron made?

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

I cannot recollect right now at the moment. I just want to know. It didn't get a second, but...

I see. Yes. Thank you for the reminder. The motion that you made was to not go into closed session. This motion is to not go into closed session and just to hear the information from HYA. That's what I understand.

Oh, you wanted it open. So, sorry.

Trustee Henry:

And his is not to have a closed session at all.

Trustee Biassotti:

Okay, so it's the same.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

No. So let me just take it off record. So Trustee Biassotti, your motion was to open the background check and open, to actually go into a deeper dive into the information. And Trustee Barron is not to go into the HYA discussion, to take the statement that HYA stands behind the candidate, and not to go into discussion about each of the items that Dr. Perez discussed.

Trustee Biassotti:

Thank you for clarifying that. I do second that motion also. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. So, Trustee Stevens?

Trustee Stevens:

Thank you. As we were kind of going through this, I can say, and I just wanted to have it on record, I was also a little hesitant about the closed session just because if I'm reading NRS correctly, it's a very narrow topic, these are very narrow topics that we can discuss in closed session. And there's

Trustee Stevens:

11 of us. So with 11 of us, if any of us veer off in that discussion in even the most little bit, we have now essentially broken the law. And that makes me very uncomfortable. I would rather be above reproach in this area. So I appreciate the motion.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Any other comments?

Okay. I would just say for mine, thank you so much. I just want the trustees to understand from an informational standpoint, so we have heard HYA's comment that they stand behind the background checks of the three trustees that are before us, from our legal counsel. Jon, what I understood from you is that we cannot bring forth anything from a CCSD background because that would have to be in closed session. That is not even an option. Correct?

Jon Okazaki:

Yes. Jon Okazaki, general counsel for the record. Yes. So CCSD employment records are separate from what HYA gathered, and I cannot allow a discussion of those records in an open meeting.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. And then, so just for me, that was just a clarification. For me, I think it is part of our-

Jon Okazaki:

I'm sorry to interrupt, I misspoke. There is an exception. The subject of those records could waive confidentiality.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. And so, thank you. Usually with the conversation with Dr. Perez, usually only the board president is preview to the background check information. And so I know I made the decision that I wanted all 11 of us to actually have that option to make that choice as a team. And so, that's why it's also an item on this agenda. So, Trustee Cavazos?

Trustee Cavazos:

Madam President, I'm fine. You just went ahead and clarified what I was going to ask you to clarify. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. So then I have a motion from Trustee Barron, I have a second from Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan. Please cast your vote.

Jon Okazaki:

I'm sorry. Again, protocol after discussion is public comment.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Oh, we did public comment at the beginning with Chris G.

Jon Okazaki:

It always has to be after discussion.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Chris G, do you have any other public comment that you would like to add since you were the only one that signed up?

Public Hearing

Chris Giunchigliani:

Madam Chair, Chris Giunchigliani for the record, I think you're doing the right thing because the law does not require that you had to have a closed-door meeting. It says may, and it's very narrow, and it specifically says you can't discuss anything else about that candidate that might be up for appointment. And I was telling somebody that the history of that came up when a university regent 35 years ago was discussed improperly at a regents meeting. And that was hence why that language even came about. So it doesn't apply just to employees. It applies to anybody. And there's a witnessing and a due process section. And so, I think you verified what you needed to as far as background, and then you can move forward. So I think you made the right decision. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. I don't see any other public comment. All right, so please cast your vote. Okay, that motion passes seven to zero. So we are going to take a five-minute recess. We're going to go into Item 2.02, five minutes. We're going to transition and have our second round of interviews with the candidates. So Dr. Perez, if you want to line them up.

Recess: 5:25 p.m.

Reconvene: 5:31 p.m.

2.02 Superintendent Search.

Interviews of the Superintendent Search Candidates conducted by the Board of Trustees , for the position of Superintendent of Schools, Clark County School District. [Contact Person: Irene Bustamante Adams] (Ref. 2.02) (*According to Governance Policy GP-3: Board Responsibilities*)

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Dr. Perez, I don't know where she went. But for the public, we have three meetings going on. We have one candidate here, and the other candidates are meeting with two other groups. And so we have 45 minutes in order to have our second round of interview. We each have a list of questions that have been assigned for the candidate. I would just like to say our goal is a total of four minutes per question. So the trustees are instructed to be concise. They can ask a follow-up if it's in within the four minutes. I will be working with my team members to keep time. We encourage you to answer the question within a minute so that if there's an opportunity to ask a follow-up question, that is great. The goal is to get through all 11 of us, and that means that that's just going to put us at the 44-45 minute mark.

So with that, first is Trustee Dominguez, then Trustee Cavazos and Trustee Stevens, and then myself. And then we'll keep going. Oh, no, we're going to go with district by district.

Yeah, we're going to go with the appointed person first and then the... No, yes, the elected and then the appointed. So Trustee Stevens. And then it'll be Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan. Trustee Stevens.

Trustee Stevens:

Thank you. Okay, our first question of the night. So what fundamental challenges does CCSD face in regard to special education? And what solutions would you bring to remedy those challenges?

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

There you go. Thank you.

Jhone Ebert:

Thank you. Thank you very much for the question regarding special education. There are three main areas that I see within the Clark County School District. First of all, number one, we have amazing educators that work with our special education students each and every day, thankful that they step up to work in our classrooms. So beyond that, we know that we have a shortage with special education educators, special education bus drivers, paraprofessionals. The whole adult pipeline is short in that area. So number one is, which the school district has already done this last school year, providing the additional stipend for the special education teachers. We have over 100 more positions filled this year. And I actually had a conversation with a special education teacher who was planning on going into administration, but because of the additional stipend, made a determination that what they would stay within the special education classroom.

Number two, we have litigation going on in the Clark County School District. And in order to get out of the litigious component that we're in, I highly recommend that we bring someone from the

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outside into the school district. I often say we do not have eyes in the back of our head. And so what are we not seeing that is transpiring within our classrooms to make sure that we're addressing the issue right away prior to any litigation.

Number three, and the final piece, is our families. Our families need to be empowered. They need to feel part of the system and the IEP developments, the conversations. In many instances when I'm speaking with the parents, they feel like it's an adversarial conversation. So changing that tone, making sure that we're all partners in this work for every single child is first and foremost, that everyone is heard through the process.

In my current role, I actually have worked with the Washoe County School District in some issues that they were having. We did exactly what I'm recommending here, getting in people that are outside of the school district situation to see what we're not seeing to develop. So those, to answer your question. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Trustee Stevens, do you have a follow-up? No? Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

Can you provide an example of how you managed a significant crisis in a previous leadership role? Provide specific explanation of how you mitigated the situation. And what were your key lessons learned?

Jhone Ebert:

Thank you, Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan. When I read this question, I was, which crisis do I choose? So there have been several, and there will be several that come up, that we don't know what transpires. So in this instance, I specifically decided to choose cybersecurity. Not only did I experience cybersecurity within the Clark County School District, but for this question, in New York. It was late in the evening that we were contacted by one of our vendors that the information within the system for testing was breached-

Information within the system for testing was breached, and in New York we have 750 school districts with over 2.1 million children. So you can imagine, immediately going into action of pulling in our legal counsel, pulling in our cyber team, pulling in those that were affected, because I'm not sitting in the school building and understanding what is transpiring and how they're going to communicate with their parents. So bringing in, quickly, a team to determine to what depth and breadth the security is. After assessing it, we made sure that to hold the vendor accountable in sharing the information directly with our school districts within 24 hours. They actually wanted to hold on the information and we said, "Absolutely not. We are transparent. This has transpired. We want to make sure our school districts are informed and communities are informed as well."

The learning from those situations is always one of being proactive as best you can. Again, no one had thought about the pandemic transpiring, but we know that health and safety is first and foremost. And so being proactive in those situations, holding people accountable, being

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transparent with all of the work that you do, and then making sure that if there are any compensation that needs to transpire with the contracts, that that is held as well. And what we did at that moment in time, is also we did a clear scrub across all of our contracts to make sure that if any future components were transpired, that we were protected as a state, working with our vendor.

The one thing that in that instance, because it was something that came to us, I would add to this conversation, is being proactive in the work. And when we went to implement the student information system here in the Clark County School District, actually had a pre-topsy. And so we pulled those same people that I spoke about together, school end users, the technology team, people from the outside and said, "What if the headline was: Implementation of the Student Information System Crashed."? That was the exercise we went through. We actually, by going through the pre-topsy, because you don't want to be on the autopsy, the pre-topsy, we found two staff members that brought to our attention, one that we were missing a group of people that we should have trained, and then two, another component in programming. And it wasn't because they didn't want to tell their boss, but they didn't know where and when, and it was through that group component. So being proactive in any large-scale event that we're working with is critical to success.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Dominguez.

Trustee Dominguez:

Thank you. Good evening. So my question is, how would you foster a culture of respect and support among staff and teachers, ensuring they feel valued and empowered in their roles?

Jhone Ebert:

Thank you Trustee Dominguez for the question. All of our staff need to know that they are heard, that they're valued and that they're trusted. During this interview or during this process, I've spoken with many of you and one of the things that I found was that you are not to just walk into a school building, that you must have an appointment prior to walking into a school building. I don't know how we can build trust across our entire system, as superintendent, as the board members, as schools, if we don't trust that you as the elected officials, if you're driving down the street in your car and you say, "Oh, there's Silverado High School, I want to jump in and say, 'Hello,' and see what's going on." And then the principal is empowered to say, "Yes. You know what? I'm available right now. Let me grab my keys. We'll go walk the campus," or, "You know what, Trustee, I apologize. We're doing state testing right now. Can we schedule a time to come back?"

So that mutual courtesy, mutual trust, mutual respect across the entire systems, between and among our teachers, between and among our support staff, our bus drivers, our amazing maintenance workers that, again, keep our buildings safe. It is about power with not power over. We will be successful as a school district when we're each empowered to drive forward and lift our children up. We need to make space for autonomy with accountability. And so building out

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guardrails and not just top down, this is how we're going to operate always, but building out guardrails, and the example that I like to use is driving down the street. We have to stay in our lane, but we can go a little bit here, a little bit to the right, a little bit to the left. As long as we're staying in our lane, we're staying safe with everyone else. That's what we need to allow in our system and trust that our educators, you asked specifically about educators and staff, to know that they're going to do what's right.

If they go too far over the lane and we've built the mutual courtesy, mutual respect with the guardrails, then we need to have a conversation about accountability and moving forward together, providing supports if they did it because they weren't aware of something that they needed to be doing, providing those supports, but then also holding people accountable. What is really critical in all of this too is what I use, my staff knows this, they always say, "No surprises, Superintendent." And it is high stakes and political items that we need to make sure, systemic, that there's a communication. So when you go into the school building, as the example I gave in the build earlier, is it's just a reporting up. Hey, Trustee Dominguez made a stop over at the school today, just so you're not surprised. Great, thank you. Was it a great visit? All of those types of things. And so keeping that communication, stewardship open and clear, and believing in our teachers and our staff that they are here to support our children, is what is going to make us successful.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you.

Jhone Ebert:

Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Trustee Barron.

Trustee Barron:

Thank you, Madam President. Superintendent Ebert, thank you very much for visiting our school, Rancho High School, yesterday. I really do appreciate it. It was good seeing you with the Rancho logo behind you. That being said, of course, you're well aware that we have significant challenges. So my question's to this, how do you plan to address the issue of attracting and retaining fully licensed classroom teachers to the underserved schools in the urban core, East Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, and other hard-to-fill positions throughout the district in an attainable, sustainable manner? And of course, if you have past examples of your success in similar situations, you're encouraged to include those in your answer.

Jhone Ebert:

Thank you very much. Yes, there are three areas that we would need to work on here, which we've been working on, and I'll also share the success that I've had professionally as well. First and

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foremost, compensation, making sure that we have a differentiation in compensation for schools where there's hard-to-fill positions. We need to make sure that they're compensated differently, and that's what has transpired with the SB231 money, making sure now at the legislature that those funds continue. I advocate, continually on a daily basis, to do that and to be able to move forward.

Number two, strengthening our professional venue that we all work in and providing supports. And what I mean by that is, and linking it to Trustee Dominguez's question, that our teachers know that they're valued and respected, each and every day. When they know they're valued and respected, they will stay in the profession. We've had teachers leave because coming out of the pandemic, there was this flip about what do teachers do each and every day in supporting our children. They do a lot, as you know, and they work well beyond an eight-hour workday to make sure that learning happens and transpires. We also need to make sure that we have a pipeline. Our diverse, multilingual workforce is sitting in our classrooms right now as we're sitting here and talking.

So we need to make sure that our students that are sitting in our classrooms know that they have a pathway. I have been specifically involved with Assemblywoman Backus and the union, and when they developed the Assembly bill to require the Teaching Academy College, right, career all the way through for every single high school. It has not been an easy pathway because it's the first time you have five organizations, the Treasurer's Office, who now has \$10 million set aside so that if someone wants to become a teacher in the Clark County School, actually across the entire state they can. But it's the Treasurer's Office, the Clark County School District, the Nevada Department of Education, as well as NSHE. And so developing those dual credit courseworks so children can see themselves moving forward in this is important.

We also have the work that we've been doing with higher education, over 1,200 paraprofessionals that have gone through the Nevada Forward program. 65% of those educators are diverse. They were sitting as staff members in our schools. They are diverse, 95% graduation rate. So with the pay, the compensation, the pathway, making sure that teachers have the support they need in a classroom and a daily basis, we will be successful as a system to have a long-term systemic, I want to stay at my school, for generations just like you have at Rancho High School. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Henry.

Trustee Henry:

Well, it's just going to keep going. Sorry about that.

Yeah.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

I will have.

Okay, you ready? Thank you.

Trustee Henry:

I got it. Sorry about that. How you doing?

Jhone Ebert:

I'm doing great.

Trustee Henry:

[inaudible 00:45:22]-

Jhone Ebert:

You have tech support with you. That's awesome.

Trustee Henry:

Right. You know I take my clerk job so seriously. Specifically, what are some innovative programs that you would implement to ensure that student voices are heard, valued, and utilized at the district level?

Jhone Ebert:

I am on fire with this question, Trustee Henry. We have been working for the last two years for the Nevada Portrait of a Learner, which you all have the copy of that work, as well as moving forward with our future work. That body of work was grounded with students first. We had students help us develop that work, their voice, they are the only ones. A lot of times, we have sat as the adults of, when I was in school, and we apply it to a classroom. Well, when I was in school, we did this. The fact of the matter is, none of us have ever been in school in a classroom during a pandemic. None of us have been in a classroom when there's phones going off, right? Distractions. And so our students have voice, they have talent, they have skillset.

My headshot that you have was taken by one of our high school students here, not... Well, actually I'm going to say it is professional. We also have a student voice on the State Board of Education. As you know, there is a bill moving forward during the legislative session to have student voice on all boards across our state. Washoe County School District does have student voice. It is amazing. If you read the paper this morning, Michael Keyes also wrote an article about student voice. We need to make sure, again, I said the adults being seen and heard, but our children need to be seen and heard in their work. And so moving all of that work forward will be important. Students also need to make sure that they have a path that they choose to success, and I will address some of that as well. But student voice, student choice in everything we do, we will be a successful school district. We'll be the destination school district, as I've said before, by doing so.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Johnson.

Trustee Johnson:

All right. Thank you, Superintendent Ebert. I'm going to shift gears a bit. How would you work with our vendors, nonprofits, and the business community to create valuable partnerships? And then how would you manage those partnerships to ensure desired outcomes are being met?

Jhone Ebert:

I have been working with vendors and nonprofit organizations for over 30 years, and the most successful ones are when we lay out clear goals and objectives to begin with, and match them with what our goals are and objectives. There are very successful vendors out there that they might have materials and resources, but they're not aligned with where we're going as a school district. And so we need to make sure we're very clear with our goals and objectives, and that we match vendors with those goals and objectives.

Specifically, we have a partnership with DonorsChoose. We started that six years ago, and Senator Dondero-Loop has continued that partnership. That partnership was developed not only through funding through the state, but also them getting in, putting some skin in the game, some funds, right? Matching funds. Philanthropy is huge in this area. I'll link the DonorsChoose program also to choice. It's very important that teachers are empowered to be able to select materials that they want and the money's not coming out of their pocket. Also, two successful partnerships, Nevada Gold Mines. They have stepped up time and time again. They work specifically with the Department of Education. They were able to provide us over \$4 million to make sure that our students had the materials from Discovery Education for 100% of our students across the entire state.

Partnerships need to have clear on-ramps and what I heard from trustees last time I sat here at the table is there might not be clear pathway to partnerships for everyone. And so first and foremost, that was one of my key pillars, was partnerships, developing for vendors and nonprofit organizations, a clear on-ramp to working with us and then also to a clear off-ramp. Because if at some point in time either the partner's not meeting our expectations or we're not, that happens too, we're not meeting our partner's expectations, they have to be able to say, "Thank you, no thank you." And it needs to be a graceful exit. It doesn't have to be contentious and all those other things, but just, again, clear guardrails and understanding what our working conditions are when we work with vendors and partners, and then an on-ramp along with an off-ramp.

Trustee Johnson:

How much time is left?

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. You used to still have two minutes.

Trustee Johnson:

All right.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Take it.

Trustee Johnson:

All right. I like to talk, so now I got these two minutes. I'ma steal them. One of the things that I know we do really well is teaching and learning. That's our core, and partners can expand what we can do better. Is there a way for us to look at our current set of partners to determine, are there things that they can do better than we can do, and then allow for those partners to do it so we can reinvest in teaching and learning?

Jhone Ebert:

100%. Once we evaluate the process that, and I did have the balanced governance training as well, so right, once we make sure we have a community vision, moving forward, setting our goals, and then having our partners identify where they fit best, then expanding those pieces. Earlier today, we were with the elected officials, specifically talking about partnerships there, expanding... When our students leave the building, there are partners that can come into our schools and provide tutoring services. Our children are behind. We should have tutors, extended day, coming into our campuses and I've spoken with community members who are ready to, they want to lean in and do this work.

Trustee Johnson:

I appreciate it. Thanks.

Jhone Ebert:

Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Zamora.

Trustee Zamora:

Thank you, Madam President. What would be your main areas of focus in a strategic plan for our school district and what initiatives would you want to own and lead? What steps will you take to achieve that vision?

Jhone Ebert:

Thank you, Trustee Zamora. Right now, across our nation, we're looking at the Carnegie Unit. We have built the entire system around 120 hours of learning per year. That was when we were farming, right? That was in 1906. We have built an educational system around farming. And so we need to look at our entire school system differently, not about the amount of time that our children spend in a seat, but what they know and what our children are able to do. And so working within our school system, and it's a shift. It's a major shift because I've spoken with a couple of counselor

Jhone Ebert:

friends and they're saying, "Okay, how am I going to schedule Algebra 1 into this, not time-bound, but competency-bound expectations?"

We have schools in Clark County School District that are doing this work. Western High School is one of them. They're doing amazing work around competencies. You also have Northeast Career and Technical Academy where every child identifies where their path is. I want to be a marine biologist. I guess, I think I wanted to be a marine biologist because I always choose that topic. I want to be a marine biologist. I want to be a dentist. I want to be a dancer. Every child should have a pathway identified as early as middle school or elementary school even. Once we have our children's hearts captured and they have a pathway that they want to succeed through, that will make our system more successful. And I want to be able to change from time-bound to competency-bound.

Again, I'll bring up Northeast CTA. He had his school open for five extra days this last summer. He was able to have over 100 students finish coursework that if they just ended on day 180, they would not have passed the course. That's an ROI. That's a cost savings because traditionally, what do we do? If kid fails, we put them back in a whole nother semester, or a year, or all of those pieces. But he was given the flexibility in time to make sure that children knew their competencies. By five days, it's a return on investment. The child, within just those five days, now is successful, understands whatever they missed and can move forward. So shifting from a time-bound system to competency-based system is not only going to help us with our funding, return on investment, but children knowing that they are successful, and teachers knowing too, that they're not moving a child on just because of their grade or their age, but they're moving a child forward because they're ready and they know the content and the curriculum.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Satory.

Trustee Satory:

Thank you. How would you handle public criticism and media scrutiny while maintaining transparency and trust?

Jhone Ebert:

Thank you, Trustee Satory, for that question. I'm going to start with, I really admire all of you for the conversation that you had just at the start of this meeting, right? Question was asking about transparency, trust. You had a great conversation in public and can share your agreements, disagreements, moving forward, being bold, having honest conversations, owning when we are not doing well. Last night, when we had the gaggle with the press, I did, and I know most of them and they know what I'm going to say. As long as they are fair and accurate, bring it on every single day of the week, right? It's not about sensationalism, but if we've done something that we shouldn't be doing, they need to report it. They're reporters, that is their job. And we need to be transparent and we need to be proactive.

Jhone Ebert:

The example that I provided with Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan in the technology piece, there are people like, "Whoa, wait. I shouldn't be telling people too fast." It's like, oh, no, we need to be talking about it. We need to be owning it. When our system and our people know that they are trusted and we are trusting, we can all move forward to success. It's how I live each and every day to make sure that people know that we've hired them, just like you are going to be doing. We are hiring you because you have a skillset. We have vetted you through all of these hoops, and ropes, and everything else. You have a skillset. We want to match it with your skillset and move our system forward.

We have children that are not succeeding academically in our school district today. Our eighth graders, by the NAEP assessment, they're a year behind. We need to say that loud, and we need to be transparent about it, and we need to, again, do things like tutoring, making sure we're having direct tutoring, immediately, extended school day, extended school year, making sure we're partnering with organizations that want to help us. Trustee Johnson's question in regard to not-for-profit and vendors, we have people, and I met her last night at the event, Stephanie, I believe her last name is Valdez, and please forgive me Stephanie if you're listening, but I was going to put her in my initial presentation about partnership because I read it in the media. I hadn't met her. And so speaking with her, shaking her hand, learning about her, and I'm like, "I know you. I know you." And then I said, "Oh, are you the one that gathered 40 different... You realized 40 schools in our school district didn't have partners for teacher appreciation week?" And she rallied people.

No one paid Stephanie. No one paid Stephanie, but one person rallied people together to celebrate educators, which we should be doing every day, not just one week a year. Thank you. I heard that and I believe it, they know that. But the power of one person to make a difference, that comes through trust, letting her fly, building people together. So I plan on doing that each and every day as superintendent.

Trustee Satory:

Thank you.

Jhone Ebert:

Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Biasotti.

Trustee Biassotti:

Hello. Within 90 days, President Trump plans to introduce a strategy to eliminate federal funds for illegal indoctrination based on gender and equity ideologies. Given these developments, do you believe students can receive a meaningful education and foster unity through a patriotic curriculum that instills shared values? And would you preemptively remove programs like DEI and gender support plans, such as Policy 5138, or would you wait for the legal outcomes of the ongoing conflict

Trustee Biassotti:

between the federal administration and local governments? If courts uphold the president's authority, will you eliminate the equity and diversity department to continue to receive federal funds?

Jhone Ebert:

Thank you Trustee Biasotti for that very layered and intentional question. I read it several times to make sure I could get your components and answer to it. Number one, we follow the law. We follow the law. As a board of trustees, you follow the law. As superintendent, I will follow the law. Our staff will follow the law. Our legal counsel will make sure we follow the law. We follow the law. Number two, the Board of Trustees, I think it's important for the entire public to know, the Board of Trustees sets the policy. So the policy that you have, right, it is a policy. So myself as superintendent, I have to follow the policy that you have set. If you change the policy, we will follow it and we'll make sure the entire staff follows it. We will follow the policy that you set.

Men and women make up the rules, as I say quite often, especially working with the governor and others across the state. Men and women develop the rules. Men and women can change the rules. And so right now we're in this fluid piece of what the law is, but we will follow what is currently the law and we will always follow your policies. That is my promise to you that we will do that. What is, specifically from my experience, when people want to change policy or law, is that we need to provide you, as superintendent, I would provide you, the entire board, with all of the details that you need to make an informed decision. I do not feel that the prior board was always provided with all of the information. It's not about my opinion. It is not an opinion. I may agree or disagree. That is no matter. I am going to provide you, just like I do with the governor, just like I do with 63 legislators.

My department right now is technical assistance to all of the legislators. So when they go to do a bill, we don't stand for or against a bill. We give them all the information they need to make decisions. So we will follow, as in tracking right now, [inaudible 01:02:47] very much tracking what's happening at the federal level. I do have colleagues that are going to be appointed by the Trump administration, so in constant contact with them as to what is going to transpire. So we need to be proactive, to your point, in following what may come down the road, and I think I've covered that. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. It's my turn, but I do want to... After Trustee Cavazos, we may still have a few minutes if trustees want to ask additional questions. My questions for the candidate is, what steps would you take to establish a culture of high expectations, both for students and personnel in CCSD?

Jhone Ebert:

High expectations, we're going to first start with what is our vision? First and foremost, we're going to make sure that we are all on the same page, all 12 of us are on the same page of the vision for the Clark County School District. That's going to take a lot of input. We're going to then set our goals and we are going to make sure that everyone understands the goals. I'd like to have the business community involved in those goals as well, as we set them. The business community, our

Jhone Ebert:

teachers, first and foremost, our entire staff. And then we need to make sure that everyone understands the goals.

When I did my presentation, sitting here two weeks ago, using the data from the Clark County School District, only 29% of our staff knew what the goals were. I don't know how you can achieve a goal if you don't know what the goals are. So we need to make sure that all of our staff know the goals. Academics, student achievement, we have a lot of data. We're very data rich. We need to get out of admiring the data and taking action on the data, right? It's not just about looking at the reports, but it's about you as the board holding us, as the staff, your only employee, myself, holding me accountable for meeting those goals and expectations.

We need to also, too, make sure that our educators have the resources that they need to be successful. You can set high expectations, but if teachers in the classroom, our support staff, if they do not have the resources that they need to be successful, then we need to own that issue. And that's part of working with, right now, the legislature is in session. We need to make sure that we're up there, every single day, talking to someone. I know we have staff up there working very hard, but that our legislators fully understand that, yes, thank you very much, \$2,500 more per student. It has reduced our vacancy rate. We're very thankful. It has reduced our turnover. However, we are still \$4,000 below the national average. That is something that we need to continue to work on as a team so that as we set those high expectations, that we have the resources to meet those high expectations as well.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you, and I know I still have a minute, but Trustee Biassotti, you still had 45 seconds, you said. Did you have a follow-up?

Trustee Biassotti:

I did, and I'll be brief. Considering the size of our district, would you be open to considering a business service outsourcing model like the one successfully implemented in the Houston Independent School District?

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

It's a different question, but did you have a follow-up on your question from the previous one? Yeah, because we have to be in the queue for different questions, and I have other trustees, but-

Trustee Biassotti:

So my follow-up question has to be relevant to my first question?

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Yeah, to your first one, or get in the queue for a follow-up on second questions.

Trustee Biassotti:

Okay. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Okay. Trustee Cavazos.

Trustee Cavazos:

Thank you, Madam President. Good evening, Superintendent Ebert. Can you specifically describe your leadership philosophy and how it aligns with the diverse needs of CCSD, including how this leadership style would successfully work with the trustees' balanced governance policies?

Jhone Ebert:

Thank you, Trustee Cavazos. I am a transformative, collaborative leader. We need transformation in our school district. We're not where we want to be, and so we need to build out, as mentioned earlier, our goals, clearly, to be able to attain them. To do so, again, I know I've said it several times, we need to make sure we're set on our vision. What is our North Star? What is our version? What are our goals that we're headed toward and moving forward? I know that some of the other candidates will talk about hypotheticals at working at scale. In New York, we set and made a determination, graduation, number one. We also made a determination that we wanted to have career pathways. That was one beautiful thing.

That we wanted to have career pathways. That was one beautiful thing. If we do not celebrate in the Clark County School District, we need to celebrate that career pathways and children knowing where they're at, we excel at. We need to make sure it happens again in all of our high schools, not just in specialized schools, but all of our high schools, as well as in middle school and elementary. I was able to take those experiences to New York, we built out a pathway. 2.1 million children in New York, we increased the graduation rate almost 3%. For our Black students, it was 5.5% increase. For our Hispanic students, it was 4.6% increase. For our students with disabilities, it was over 5%. We made engaging curriculum, so that children can flourish and they see themselves. Here in the Clark County School District, the diversity, I advocated for our ELL students. We had a director for all of ELL in our school district. It needed to be elevated.

As an assistant superintendent, when you have almost 100,000 children that are multilingual learners, we needed to have an assistant superintendent position, so I took that to the superintendent at the time and said, "We need to elevate that position." I also, which I know many of the people at the dais and people in the audience, participated in developing our master plan for our ELL students. We had not had a master plan, and this was a new group. The ELL students were not in my portfolio at the time, but because I saw where it was, I asked to add it to my portfolio, so I had the technology division with my experience as CTO, I had the curriculum professional development division, and I had RC as well, all of the data.

It was really great to have the data, the curriculum, and the technology all in one portfolio to make sure that they're moving on behalf of children together to support our teachers, to support our principals, and our community. Added to that ELL and came out with a master plan, very proud of

Jhone Ebert:

it, just before I left for New York, but at scale, working in the Clark County School District, in New York, 2.1 million children here in Clark County School District at the time, 320,000. I have the experience to do exactly what you're talking about, moving at scale, the diversity with our children. We did have the professional development, all three candidates, with Dr. Alsbury. He was great in explaining, and hopefully I've articulated it throughout my entire conversation, about the balance component with my job as superintendent, with you as the board moving forward. I'm excited, I'm really excited.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Now we're going to move into our-

Trustee Cavazos:

Do I have any time left?

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

No. Yeah, it's 4:13 minutes.

Trustee Cavazos:

I'm so sorry. I'll just say that she skillfully answered my follow-up question before I asked my follow-up question, so thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Okay, thank you. Now it's time to go into second rounds of questions. We have six minutes left, there are some additional questions in our script, but Trustee Dominguez, it doesn't have to follow any of those. You can ask your own.

Trustee Dominguez:

Perfect, thank you. As superintendent, regarding our proficiencies in reading and math, would you support grade retention or tutoring or summer school to help our kids that need to raise those proficiencies?

Jhone Ebert:

Thank you for the question, I was going to say "Superintendent," Trustee Dominguez. The competency-based learning component is erasing the time piece of, "Is it just 180 days that our children need to learn?" It could be 185 days, as in the instance with Northeast CTA. It could be 220 days. Algebra one is the most failed class in the school district, and it's not because the children can't learn, is that most of them need more time or we need to weed out some of that curriculum that's in there in that content area. Yes, extending time, but adding direct tutoring to it as well. Extended school day, extended school year, tutoring, mentoring programs. Within the Read

Jhone Ebert:

By Grade Three law right now, as it sits, there is a component for retention. The State Board of Education is looking at that law and making a determination.

There are exemptions for retention, but right now, for proficiency, for reading, that is part of the law that we have in the state of Nevada. The exemptions exclude ELL students, if they've already been retained, and there's a few others. But to get out of the time-bound piece of our system, I think is going to help us in many ways. It may take a child five years to graduate, that's okay. People think, "Well, if..." That's okay. We want to make sure you have a skillset to be able to create a home and a life and a future at the end of the day. Yes and to your question with those pieces.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

You answered quite a few of my follow-up questions. I apologize for my froggy voice, but I hear all the time teachers talking about they have tier-one instruction, but there's a lot of that loss of autonomy and we're not seeing results. What do you think is the root causes and what would you do within the first six months to really address some of those concerns?

Jhone Ebert:

Thank you, Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan. There are a few things going on. The implementation with which the materials were rolled out was very fast, and the differentiation, not a school that is in a high needs area versus an affluent area, you're talking apples and oranges. We need to make sure that our teachers have the... They all have to have tier-one instruction, we all need to be on grade level, but it is not on page 52 on the 10th day and we're all doing the exact same thing, because you may have multilingual learners in your classroom, you may have special education students in your classroom. You may have been out of school, because the school was closed because the air conditioning went out. We need to make sure that we are looking at our schools that are successful. I want to lift up one that I visited, Gehring, right? Blue Ribbon School, they're one of 14 schools in the nation.

There is a lot of good things happening in the Clark County School district, one of 14 schools in the nation. What are they doing in their school that we can also replicate in other schools? The why behind tier-one instruction, I think a lot of teachers have not had the opportunity to understand that we have massive transiency rate within our school district, so to keep a student consistent, going from a Fremont Middle School to a Woodbury Middle School, to Swainston Middle School, we do need to have the same curriculum across, but meeting our children where they're at every day, just like we want to meet our teachers where they're at every day. Same materials, but trusting our teachers that they know what they're doing and being successful. Again, we need to have the accountability component in there as well, and monitoring, again, not just admiring the data, but monitoring and providing supports if needed.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Dr. Perez, I'm going to look at you, but I think Trustee Satory is in the queue.

Dr. Perez:

We're right at the end.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Okay, I'm sorry. All right. Thank you, trustees. Thank you, Ms. Ebert. We're going to take a five-minute recess and we will bring in our second candidate.

Recess: 6:19 p.m.

Reconvene: 6:26 p.m.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Trustee Biassotti and Trustee Barron, if you could make it back to the dais. All right. Mr. Shuldiner, we are ready to get started. We have all 11 of us, I'd like to welcome you. We are going to go ahead and have our round of questioning. We are asking trustees to be concise and then we are asking the candidate to be concise. Trustees are allowed to ask you a follow-up question on the question, or we will move to the next trustee. Mr. Caruso, if you could ask the individuals in the hallway just for some quietness, thank you. We are going to start by our districts, so Trustee Stevens.

Trustee Stevens:

Good evening.

Ben Shuldiner:

Hello.

Trustee Stevens:

Our first question of the night is about special education. What fundamental challenges does CCSD face in regard to special education, and what solutions would you bring to remedy these challenges?

Ben Shuldiner:

Sure. Well, good evening, everyone. It's a pleasure to be here. I really appreciate the question, special ed has a very special place in my heart. Very specifically, you need more special ed teachers. That is something that absolutely has to be addressed. There's also about appropriate funding, making sure that there is enough resources for the district, for their students. We also have to make sure that all of the paperwork, it's a very litigious part of education, are the annuals, the triennials, the re-evals. Is all of that being done? Because you have to make sure that the

Ben Shuldiner:

students actually are getting the services that they need, but in terms of what's happening, I don't know if you've read the State Performance Plan from May 2024. There's some really disconcerting things there. That's the latest report of special ed for this district. The district graduation rate for students with IEPs went from 72 to 68 to 54, so it's dropped by almost 20 points in just three years. What's going on? We have to really ask ourselves, "Is there an issue?"

The thing that actually is more disconcerting than that is that the dropout rate has gone from 14 to 23 to 32. Now, why dropout rate is more concerning is that, with some students that have IEPs, they can get what's called a certificate of completion, or here you call it adjusted diploma. Those would not be considered dropouts, but the fact that you have a 32% dropout rate for students with IEPs, that means there's a disconnect, because that means that they're not getting their certification of completion, they're not getting their adjusted diploma. Is that there's a disconnect? Where's the relationship? Where's the communication? Are they part of the schools? Are they in band? Are they part of sports programs? Whatever it is, there's no adult that's making sure that those children are being taken care of. I'd be very worried about that. Certainly things that we can help is more licensed professionals. Where are the partnerships with higher ed? There's ways to add credentials. Even if you already have a teaching license, how do you add a special ed?

The other big questions I would have is that, when you actually look at the report, it says that the student behavior is getting better. It goes from 36 to 52. It also says that parent involvement is getting better. If behavior is getting better, parental involvement is getting better, but the graduation rate is dropping by 20 and the dropout rate is going up, I'm really curious about what we're focusing on. The other big concern I would have is that they've actually only have less than 2% of your special ed population is in separate facilities. The severe, the people that really need support. It's less than 2%. The state is about 1.3, Clark County is about 1.5, so it's not like there's an overabundance of now students that have to be in separate facilities, but what is happening in Clark County is that there's an increase in more restrictive environment.

Well, my question is, "Why are you seeing an increase from 18 to 23% of more restrictive?" Is it that there's not enough teachers? Is it that their teachers don't have the training to support those kids? I'm glad you started with special ed, because I think what it does is it highlights some of the structural issues that this district has. Now, again, how do you solve that? The first thing is you got to get more teachers in the room, you got to throw more resources in it, but you also have to be really honest and open about what's going on, and you can't just pretend like... Graduation rate is 81.5%. Yeah, but for students with IEPs, it's dropping by 20 points. I think there's a lot there. Certainly, as superintendent, I would want to make sure that we have a very, very strong central office that understands special ed and that goes into the schools to help them, not as a punitive or negative manner. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan?

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

I'm going to go right into it, Mr. Shuldiner.

Ben Shuldiner:

Sure.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregen:

Can you provide an example of how you managed a significant crisis in a previous leadership role? Provide a specific explanation of how you mitigated the situation, and what were your key lessons learned?

Ben Shuldiner:

Sure. Managing a significant crisis as an urban superintendent, we call that Tuesday. It happens all the time, and there's a lot of things that I can talk about, but the one I want to give as an example is actually shutting down schools. A lot of districts need to shut down schools, because they don't have the student population, what have you, and they make a big mistake. The big mistake is they do it from the top down. When I got to Lansing, we had four schools that were about half full, so we knew that that was an issue, but we didn't just make a decision on high, superintendent comes in and says, "We got to shut it down." The first people you talk to, the parents, then the children, and the teachers and the schools. What we did is we actually had the conversations starting from the ground up saying, "Hey, there's two schools. They're really close to each other. One has air conditioning, the other doesn't. Would you like to be in the air conditioning room?"

They said, "Yeah, that makes sense." We said, "You know what? We have school-based budgeting." If you have two half-empty schools, you actually can't have a full-time art teacher, but if you combine, you could have a full-time art teacher, you could also have a full-time music teacher. But we're not saying this in the press, we're not talking about the decisions the superintendent's going to make. What we're doing is we're sitting with the community and saying, "Hey, what do you think is best for your children?" Then what happens is the parents, the kids, we sit with the teachers, we say, "Hey, what are you going to do together?"

"We can have more programs, because we're going to have more money, we're going to have more facilities." Those are the things that we do, and when you look at big districts, like a Denver or Salt Lake or Memphis, they need to do it. They're having a huge problem. Why? Because they start from the top down. What I was able to do in Lansing is actually bring the community forward, so that we're not making a decision, they're asking for it. The other thing that we did really smartly is one of the things communities really worry about is, if you empty a school, it remains empty, and you don't want that to be in your community. What did we do at the same time is we made sure that the two buildings that we were going to close actually didn't close. We had a partnership with the city, where we actually brought in the board of elections to rent out space, so we were now making money and having them there. Then half the building, we turned into a nonprofit incubator, so that nonprofits who wanted to help our kids could use the space.

Then the other building, we went to Head Start. We said, "Hey, Head Start. Would you like to use some of our buildings? Pay us rent, and we'll take a couple of classrooms," and now we have a building that's Head Start-run, but we have some three pre-K programs, and there's a relationship there. Then, when we finally have the press conference, when we finally announce that this is what we're going to do with the board and the superintendent, who's standing behind us? The teachers,

Ben Shuldiner:

the parents, the kids, the nonprofits, the city saying, "This is what the district and the community want." That's how you do leadership. Shutting down a school is one of the hardest things a district can ever do, and we didn't have anybody come to board meetings, we had nobody saying any negative things. It was, "Wow, they talked to us first. They made the decision what was best for kids and for best for parents and best for teachers."

The other thing we did, and this is why we made sure to have the staff involved, was that when you combine two schools, someone's got to be the principal and someone's going to be the assistant principal, and someone's going to get a demotion. We said, "We don't have to do it that way, both people can get paid as a principal." We talked to the union, we sat down with them, "What's the difference? 10,000 bucks? \$20,000?" We knew that, to bring this together, we needed the people. Again, rather than do something on high, we worked together. Now we have, instead of four schools, two schools, but now we have two buildings where the kids have air conditioning, they have full-time art, they have full-time music, and you have parents that are happy.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you, that is time. Then we have Trustee Dominguez.

Trustee Dominguez:

Good evening.

Ben Shuldiner:

Hello.

Trustee Dominguez:

How would you foster a culture of respect and support among staff and teachers, ensuring they feel valued and empowered in their roles?

Ben Shuldiner:

I mean, this is a common refrain that we hear here as well as many other places. I would do everything I could to build back the trust between staff, but also between the community, parents, kids. The way you do that is you're present. When I got to Lansing, the community, and certainly the teachers referred to as "The suits from downtown." Now I'm Ben. Why? Because I'm in the schools all the time. I'm there to support them, I'm there to help them. The people from downtown, they were former principals and teachers, and they spend their time in the schools not punitively, not dictatorially, not to get them in trouble, but they see us as, "Ben, thanks for... I want to show you this class. We're trying to do differentiation, what are your thoughts on that?"

You change the dynamic completely, and that's what we have to do. Now, some specifics. Certainly, we would want to make sure that there's open lines of communication between faculty, staff, and everybody with the superintendent, but also with the main office. We also have to make sure that there's school visits, we could have office hours. There's all sorts of things, but I really

Ben Shuldiner:

want to be very clear about what I think Clark County is also suffering. The best thing you can do for your employees is let them do their job. There seems to be this overabundance of paperwork, overabundance of micromanaging, overabundance of not allowing folks to actually do what they need to do, and then there's this punitive and capricious and arbitrary stuff.

The other thing you got to fix is... The way that you can become a better teacher is maybe not have 45 kids in a class. That's really difficult, so you want to make happier teachers? Don't send 45 kids in a classroom. Again, that's a job of a superintendent and a budget, and things like that. I'll leave you with this. MetLife has done a study on workplace happiness for like 90 years, and they always ask the same question, "What makes you happy?" Without fail, for decades, it's not salary, it's not benefits, it's, "Am I respected in my job and can I do a good job?" What we owe all of our staff, our teachers, our principals, our paraprofessionals, and certainly what we owe the kids and the parents is, can we allow the educators to do their job with the facilities that they have, with the resources that they need, and with the type of environment that allows them to do it?

Now, we have to hold them accountable, big accountability guy, but one of the things that happens is, when you're treating folks without the respect, they're not going to be able to do their job. I would say, yes, give them fun things on teacher appreciation and cupcakes and... That's not what staff want. What they want is to be able to do their job and treat it well and with respect, and I think we can do that.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Trustee Dominguez, you have one more minute, if you want to follow up.

Trustee Dominguez:

I'll reserve it for the-

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Okay, Trustee Barron.

Trustee Barron:

Thank you, Madam President. Superintendent Shuldiner, although I wasn't there, I wanted a late welcome to Rancho High School.

Ben Shuldiner:

Thank you.

Trustee Barron:

That's my hood, obviously. Other people out there also, that's our hood. Of course, in the hood, in our hood, in my hood, in my specific community, we have some issues, and the issue is not having enough fully-licensed classroom teachers. How do you plan to address the issue of attracting and retaining fully-licensed classroom teachers to the underserved schools in the urban core, East Las

Trustee Barron:

Vegas, North Las Vegas, and other hard-to-fill positions throughout the district in an attainable, sustainable manner. Of course, if you have any past examples of success in similar situations, I'd love to hear about it.

Ben Shuldiner:

Absolutely, and thank you for welcoming me from yesterday. It was a beautiful experience in a lovely school. Yeah. The issue of making sure that you have a high-quality teacher in every classroom is very difficult. It's an issue here in Clark County, it's an issue across the country. It was an issue when I got to Lansing, we had almost 100 teacher vacancies, and for a district of 10,000, 11,000 kids, that's quite substantial. In the last three years, we've brought that down by 85%. We now only have about 15 teacher vacancies, and those, we're working on. Now, you might say, "Well, how did you do that?" Right? Again, Lansing is an entire city of hard-to-fill. It is an entire place that has had a lot of concerns. A couple of things. One, you've got to work with the union, because there are ways to use union contracts to be thoughtful about finding ways to incentivize going to certain schools. Now, the teachers union is doing things like that right now.

I know there's the extra money that might or might not exist, but you always want to be thoughtful of saying, "If this is a hard-to-fill school, how do we incentivize people to go there?" That's one. The second is redo the HR system. What you find so often is it's really hard to get a job. What I heard from Lansing over and over, "Well, I tried to apply, I really wanted there, but you know what? It took so long to get a callback, I went to Okemos or East Lansing," or whatever. We've got to really think about when the moment somebody touches the Clark County School District saying, "I want to work here," somebody has to grab them and say, "Great, what do you want?" Maybe they don't want to be a third-grade teacher, you can't only offer them that. You have to say, "Well, what else?" When you fix the HR systems, you'd be amazed. One of the big things we did over the summer was fix that, and we found so many teachers that we would have said no to, because, well, they applied for the fifth-grade position and that was covered.

Well, somebody just makes a phone call and say, "How about fourth grade?" Right? Be thoughtful about that. The third thing is grow your own. There are a lot of programs, and maybe there's state funding, there's some federal funding, depending on if that still exists, but we could find them money ourselves. You're a paraprofessional, you're an aide, you're in the school district, you already care, you already... But maybe you don't have the credentials. Well, why can't the school district help pay for that? Well, let's have a partnership with UNLV or whoever and say, "Look, we, as a district, are going to grow our own and we're going to take these folks and we're going to move them forward." Another one, which is both the difficult and hard one is you got to increase pay.

When you look at salaries and marketability, right now, salary in the Clark County School District is pretty good, but if it's better, you probably are going to attract more. You also have to make sure that people know that the salary is good, right? Are the places in Arizona and Utah and around here, do they know what the starting salary is? You've got to be really thoughtful, and that talks about recruitment. One of the things we've done in Lansing, which is just awesome, is if you're a certified teacher and you bring in another certified teacher, and you both spend the year, you get

Ben Shuldiner:

\$1,000. Why not have other teachers bring in their friends that are certified teachers? They went to grad school together. How about we incentivize folks to actually say, "I'll bring my friends in. They're certified, they're going to do the full year"? They can get a bonus.

The other one, and I know that there's been a little bit of a fraught relationship with J-1 visas, but in Lansing, we've had a tremendous support with that. We have a Mandarin immersion program, we have a Spanish immersion program. I read here that you have a limit of like 175 J-1 visas, I'd like to know why. I heard that there were some issues about the companies you might've been working with. From the district, we take care of them the moment they come into the country.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

I would ask you just to wrap up-

Ben Shuldiner:

Sure.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

... so we can move on.

Ben Shuldiner:

Of course. I think that looking at J-1 visas, looking at H-1B visas, but making sure you're supporting those folks. Then certainly the last thing, which is probably the hardest, is if everybody sees that the school that they work at is awesome, people are going to want to work there, and I think we have to do that. Those are about eight different ways that I would do it.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Henry?

Trustee Henry:

Specifically, what are some innovative programs that you would implement to ensure that student voices are heard, valued, and utilized at the district level?

Ben Shuldiner:

I love this question. Students are the best. One thing I would actually suggest is you can have students on the board. In New York, we had student representatives. In Lansing, I've been trying to push the board to get there. I think they're really, really close, which I'm really excited about, but you could also create junior boards where you have a system, like a board where you get students in, they can suggest policy changes, they can make reports, they can do all that. I think that you do have student councils, I was reading that, but do you have regional student councils, so that they can work with each other? Then those student councils make presentations and actually, hopefully, get taken seriously. They present to the principals, they present to the board. Of course, we would

Ben Shuldiner:

have student-superintendent roundtables. I love that. This is probably one of my favorite things all month, is when I sit with a bunch of kids, and we just sit in a circle and we talk about what they need.

Now, I will say this, and again, I don't want to throw shade, but it sounds like you have something called the Superintendent Student Advisory Council, right? I saw a video. What did I see? I saw not that many, some students sitting at tables while the adults were standing, and the adults were talking at them. There was definitely a power dynamic where the adults were leading the charge and the kids were sitting there, and then I saw there was a report. I was like, "Well, there was a report, that's great," and the first topic, it said, "What we learned." I said, "That's awesome. What did the district learn from talking to the kids?" That's not what it meant. What we learned was, "What did the students learn by listening to the adults?" That's not student voice, that's not student voice at all. When you come into our student-superintendent roundtable, we all sit in a circle. We all make sure that the students are the ones that are leading.

It's all well and good to use fancy language and say that, "We have roundtables," and, "We do student voice," but when you really look hard and you say, "What does it mean when you have student voice?" It's not about what we learned, meaning what the kids learned about the district, it should be-

... not about what we learned, meaning what the kids learned about the district, it should be what we learned, what did the district learn from the children?

And the thing I want to point out is there was a survey done about student safety, I think it was last year, and there were five high schools where half or more than a half of students felt unsafe. What did you do? Did you immediately go to those schools and try to fix that? Because if you didn't, then that means you're not listening to student voice. That's something that we have to make sure we do because the worst thing is to ask for somebody's opinion, get it, and then not do anything about it.

And so, I think that you're in this prime position where the students want to talk, they want to have a voice, they want to be part of it, but the district has to actually believe that their voice matters and I think there's a lot of good ways of doing that.

But I would certainly urge this board and this district, regardless of who becomes superintendent, is, please follow up with those survey results and please make sure that there's tangible things that this district's doing to address those concerns.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

You have one minute for a follow-up.

Trustee Henry:

Yes. How would you attract a diverse group of students, those hard to reach students?

Ben Shuldiner:

Sure. One of the ways is go to the schools. Usually, when you ask a principal, "Oh, send me your kids." They're like, "Who's an A student?" Right? No, no, no, you say, "We're going to have a meeting and there's pizza." You attract quite a lot of folks.

But you could also be really clear with your principals, if you're asking for students, is, "I'd like a cross section. Can you invite?" When kids are personally invited to something? They really like that. But when it's usually a, "Well, we want something," kids will self-select out because they're like, "Well, that's not for me."

I think David Letterman has a C student scholarship, which I always thought was great. And he said, "I want to give money to kids that are getting Cs."

I think what we have to do if you're actually going to hear student voice is you do surveys for everybody, but then, when you have like real kind of face-to-face is you make sure that the principal or the directors or whoever really go to the schools, superintendent, I'll go to the schools and just walk the halls. "Hey, I'd like to speak to you. Hey, could you come to this?" And then, when people are feel invited and feel safe, you'll get that, but if you just send an email, it's only going to be the kids that always answer.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Johnson.

Trustee Johnson:

Absolutely. Good evening, Mr. Shuldiner.

Ben Shuldiner:

Hello.

Trustee Johnson:

How would you work with our vendors, nonprofits, and the business community to create valuable partnerships? And then, how would you manage those partnerships to ensure desired outcomes are being met?

Ben Shuldiner:

Got to open the doors, man. I think that what I'm seeing is a district that acts, sometimes, like The Wizard of Oz, where you're behind the curtain. And so, what a superintendent has to do is lead that charge, be the biggest cheerleader, say, "Who wants to help."

When I got to Lansing, it was very, very similar, there were all these people saying, "Ben, we don't really talk to the community." I said, "Okay, great. First meeting, get all the pastors in a room." "What are you talking about?" I said, "I want all the pastors in a room." We filled 40 pastors in a room.

Ben Shuldiner:

I said, "Hi everybody. You don't know me, but I know you. You're here to help, that's your life's mission. This is what we need, mentoring, tutoring." Because we know, research is very clear, three things work, teacher in the classroom, mentoring, tutoring. Said, "Look, you all say you want to help," I said, "great, mentoring and tutoring." And they just looked at me and say, "Great. Sign us up."

And so, in those three years, we now have United Mentoring Program run by one church, we have STREETS 517 run by another church, we have Eastside Community Center, we have all these things and all it took was just inviting them inside because what you have to do with your community, they want to help. I've been walking the city, I've met probably a thousand people in the last couple of days, I have never met a community that loves their district more, that loves their kids more and want to help.

What did I hear from everybody? How do we help? What the district has to do is have very clear goals and objectives. Don't just take whatever they want, if somebody comes to you and says, "Hey, I want to create this program," you say, "Well, is that part of our goals?" Let's say the goal is graduation, "Well, is this new program going to help graduation?" "Yes." "Great. Then please..." "No," then maybe we can say no. Districts also have to learn how to say no sometimes too.

But I will tell you that nonprofits, churches, whoever it is, they respect when you come in and say, "Our district goal is," let's say, "graduation, lowering the number of one-star schools, increasing teacher... lowering vacancies," whatever it is. And you say, "Can you help us with that?"

And the same thing with the pastors, I said, "We need mentoring and tutoring," because that's what the research shows to move the needle. And they said, "That makes sense. What can we do to help?" "Here are the schools. Let's bring it on."

And so, I think that when you have a very thoughtful series of goals and expectations, and then you go to the community and say, "This is what we know is going to move the kids. Do you want to help?" they're going to come in droves. There are 2.4 million amazing people in this community, everybody wants the school district to work, you just got to give them, or we, hopefully, have to give them the opportunity to help.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. You have one minute.

Trustee Johnson:

I'm going to use that minute very wisely. How would you figure out how to take what we do well, which is teaching and learning, and then, find external partners who could do other services for us?

Ben Shuldiner:

Yeah, I think there's a couple of things. I mean, if you have something like a mentoring program or afterschool programming, one of the things that we've found to be really, really powerful is also allow those nonprofit partners to know what the curriculum is. Now, look, our teachers are amazing, they're the pedagogues, but there's nothing wrong with doing things like homework help,

Ben Shuldiner:

there's nothing wrong with supporting them with the curriculum itself. And what we find is the more that everybody, parents especially, know what kids are supposed to learn, they can then help those kids learn.

I was speaking to somebody the other day, there's now software that can help parents teach kids, especially K-2, how to read and how to read in multiple languages. Why don't we start to think, how do we attune our standardized curriculum with how parents can help, how the community can help?

I mean, could you imagine if every Friday, every Thursday, every Tuesday, whatever, you walked into a gymnasium and there's a bunch of tutors there and it's all nonprofits, and they're all making sure that the kids are at proficiency level, that'd be amazing. And look, I'd love all the teachers to be there too, but they work really hard, maybe they don't want to spend you the extra 10 hours doing it, but you bring in the community, you'd be amazed how things change really quickly.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Zamora.

Trustee Zamora:

Good evening. What would be your main areas of focus in a strategic plan for our district? And what initiatives would you want to own and lead? The second part of that question is, what steps will you take to achieve that vision?

Ben Shuldiner:

Great. Well, as you heard me say last time, I really believe in co-construction. So I'm not going to stand here and say, "These should be your goals." It should be, "What are our goals?" Literally. It should be the community, it should be parents, it should be kids, it should be the board, especially, what have you.

But I will say that there's some things that are pretty striking for this district that I would suggest they could possibly be part of those goals. I mean, one is graduation rates, right? That's something that we are hearing constantly. You're at 81.5, there's no reason why you're not at 85 in the next year or two, and I think you could probably get to 90 in about 2 1/2, 3 years.

The other one is 120-plus one-star schools, you have to address that. If 1/3 of the schools are at one-star, that means a lot of children aren't being served. But again, I don't want to speak for the community, that's not right, but I think that there are some very specific things that I would focus on.

The other thing, of course, is vacancies. How do we expect the meal to be moved if you don't have... I talked to somebody yesterday that said that there was a kid in their school that hadn't had a certified teacher in three years. How do we expect that to move?

So in terms of goals, in terms of things we need to do, graduation, one-star, vacancies, and then, the kind of softer, but more difficult, you have to increase communication. You have to increase transparency. You have to increase building back the trust from students and parents.

Ben Shuldiner:

One of the things that I talked about last time that I would love to bring is informational study sessions. One of the things that a superintendent and their staff needs to do is take something like the budget and spend two hours with the board, very publicly, going through everything step by step. Because the great thing about doing it with the board, it means everybody behind me and everybody watching at home also gets to learn that.

And so the question, and thank you for writing them beforehand, so I have them in front of me, the question was about what do I want to own and lead? All of it. God bless you. All of it.

The whole purpose of being a superintendent is to make sure that there are goals that the district believes in. And my job, along with everybody else, is to believe in those goals and focus on those goals.

Sometimes what happens is districts get completely sidetracked because they're like, "Oh, the shiny new thing," or, "Oh, this new program," you got to stop that. You say, "What are our big goals?" And the superintendent and everybody needs to own that.

And the way you do that is by, not only collectively building it, but then also, publicizing it and making sure that everybody knows what you mean and then hold people accountable to it, again, not in a punitive and problematic way, but in a supportive way. "Hey, remember what our goals are? Are we spending the money wisely to get those goals? Hey, what are we doing to... Oh, you need this? Great. Okay. Oh, you made it amazing? Amazing. How do we go to the next step?"

So look, I mean, again, there are a lot of things, and I've spoken before, how do you raise graduation rates? You have graduation specialists. You make sure the data systems are right. You may make sure that you're focusing on individual kids.

The one-star schools, I think you have to put all 120-plus of them together in a way that you have people that are leading that charge, and their job is to make sure that those schools are getting support. I'm not sure that there is enough of a focus on that. Also, schools need to understand how one-star schools are graded. How do you get to be a one-star school? What are you doing? There's a lot there.

And of course, with transparency and communication, it comes from the top. You have to have a superintendent that is communicative, is open, is public. Those are the things that will really change the district.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Satory.

Trustee Satory:

Thank you. How would you handle public criticism and media scrutiny while maintaining transparency and trust?

Ben Shuldiner:

You take it. I mean, that's the deal. I'm a public servant, if the press wants to come after me, that's okay, that's their job. If an angry parent wants to yell at me, I will listen, I will be thoughtful, I will be respectful, I will take notes and I will respond. I will never promise that I'm going to agree with everybody, but I'm always going to be super respectful.

When you come through the cauldron of New York, you know how to do this. I mean, when I sat on the New York City School Board, there would be meetings where they would bring in, literally, like seven school buses worth of people, hundreds of people. There would be banners.

And what do you do? You sit there and you listen to everybody, and you take notes and you're respectful and you say, "Thank you," and then, at the end, you really listen and then, you make decisions.

I mean, you handle public criticism by handling it. You don't take it personally, even if it is personal. But what you do do is you actually listen because if somebody is willing to come to a room like this or to another meeting, and in New York, we would have these meetings that will go to three in the morning, if somebody is that interested that they are up at three in the morning because they want to talk to us, I better be awake and I better be listening to them, and I'm going to treat them with the most respect possible.

Now, I know that there's some concern, "Ben, you're from a small, little city," but the thing about Lansing is it's the capital and so, it's actually got more press than you would think. So because it's the state capital, we have three news stations, we have a printed newspaper, we have a weekly. And because it is a small city, guess what? They have lots of things to write about. And they're always in the school district. We have press conferences all the time.

And you know that nature abhors a vacuum, if you don't give them a story, they'll find a story. And so, one of the things that you do is you're just open and honest. What I have found, and this is always true, they're going to find out the truth anyway, why wouldn't you just lead with it?

And I think I shared this story previously, when I got to Lansing, almost half of our schools were what were called partnership schools or very low level. And everybody was saying, "Oh, Ben, how are you going to sugarcoat this? How are you going to twist this? How are you going to make us look good?" I was like, "We're not. We're just going to walk right up, actually, call a press conference, say, "Hey everybody, here's what happened. Schools are not serving the kids as best as they can, we own it, we understand it. Here's our plan. Here's what we're doing. And I cannot wait to invite you back next year when we'll give you the list again.'"

And we did. And guess what? The list was a half. And the next year, it was almost gone. And now, we only have two schools left, and we think that both are going to be off that list.

But you never run from it. You never shirk from that responsibility. It's very, very important. I mean, the note I wrote to myself is, you own the data, you don't blame others, you have a plan and you move forward. That's how you do it. And it's certainly something that I've done all my life.

In fact, I was just at ASA, which is the superintendent's conference, and I was speaking there about communication. And I used these stories about how do you actually make sure that you're honest and open, you're willing to take the heat, and then you move forward.

Ben Shuldiner:

Do I have one more second? Oh-

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

50-

Ben Shuldiner:

50.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

50 seconds.

Ben Shuldiner:

There's the old line that success has a thousand parents and failure is an orphan. I would say that's true, except for failure has one parent, and that's the superintendent. You got to take it. It's your district when it fails, and it's everybody's when it succeeds, because you have to be willing to stand up and say, "This is on me."

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Biassotti.

Trustee Biassotti:

Good evening, Mr. Shuldiner.

Ben Shuldiner:

Hello.

Trustee Biassotti:

Within 90 days, President Trump plans to introduce a strategy to eliminate federal funds for illegal indoctrination based on gender and equity ideologies. Given these developments, do you believe students can receive a meaningful education and foster unity through a patriotic curriculum that instills shared values? And would you preemptively remove programs like DEI and gender support plans such as Policy 5138, or wait for the legal outcomes of the ongoing conflict between the federal administration and local governments? If courts uphold the president's authority, will you eliminate the equity and diversity department to continue to receive federal funds?

Ben Shuldiner:

All right, thank you for that question. The first thing I want to start off with is I will not do anything illegal. I appreciate the way that you worded that question. I am your one employee, the board has

Ben Shuldiner:

one employee, and that's a superintendent, and you have to trust that I am going to do everything within the law. And that's really important.

And it's something I take very, very seriously, so seriously, in fact, that in December, we had a couple of board members that were leaving the board, they were retiring. It was awesome. And of course, we get them plaques, we get them plaques, we get them flowers, but we have a rule, you can't spend more than \$100 on a gift to a board member. Well, the plaque cost \$116. And so, they said, "Well, we'll just take care of it." I said, "Absolutely not. Absolutely not." My job is to protect you from ever doing anything wrong or against the rules. So I just wrote a check myself. I wrote a check for \$16, it's okay.

The purpose is that I want to make sure that we're always, always following the guidelines, always following the rules. So if the question is, would we ever do anything illegal? Absolutely not, we cannot. And you need to trust that I'm going to do that. That's very, very important.

Now, in terms of policies, I think the other thing that we have to make very clear, and thank you for voting on balanced governance and all of that, which I love, and I think we'll talk about that later, is there's also rules and responsibilities of the board as well as a superintendent.

Now, I love balanced governance, I think that we should be acting together and we should be co-creating, we're doing all those things, but there are three really big things that the board really has to do alone, not necessarily with the superintendent. One hire and fire superintendents, hopefully, more hiring than firing, but that is your job. Second, approve large scale budgets, things like that, that's your job. And the third is policy. And so, you talked about Policy 5138, that is absolutely the purview of the board.

But also, the thing about the board is you are all different, wonderful, beautiful people, you have different opinions, but when you create policy, you speak as one. And what I would want to make sure is that your voice is heard, that everybody on this day has his voice is heard. And that if this is a question about policy, that has to come from you all. My job is to support that, absolutely, but legally, you don't want a superintendent to get into the weeds around things like the policy. My job, again, we're supposed to be collective and we work together, absolutely, but hiring and firing the superintendent, big budget, approval budgets, big things like that, and then policy, and then, as your one employee, my job is to follow it.

Now, what I will say though is, from what I read and what you've wanted and what this district has been very clear about, is what it sounds like you really want me to focus on is getting kids to graduate, fixing the budget, getting more teachers. I'm going to make sure that I do everything I can to support every child that I can, that's all 300,000.

So I very much appreciate the question, and the answer I would give is, I would never want to put you in jeopardy where the superintendent is doing things illegal. And I certainly would never want to overstep my role by telling you what policies to create. But what I will say is, certainly, my job is to treat every single child with respect, to get every child across that finish line, to support our staff, to support our faculty, and to make sure that I am following what the board has asked for, which is to get rid of as many one-star schools and make them five-star schools, increase graduation and

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increase all of those things. So I very much appreciate that question, but it's definitely... Okay. But I really want to make sure that the roles and responsibilities of a superintendent are very clear.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. My question, and there's going to be 10 minutes after that, what steps would you take to establish a culture of high expectation for both the students and personnel in CCSD?

Ben Shuldiner:

I love this question. So you got to set goals, but you have to do it collectively. And the story that I'm going to tell you is one of the things I'm probably the most proud of, is I was asked to be the superintendent of Lansing. I got the job around now in March, but I didn't start officially until July 1st. It was the middle of COVID. The superintendent had been there, he had come out of his third retirement to take care of it during COVID.

And I said, "Can I speak to everybody before I'm official?" He said, "Ben, do whatever you want." So I said, "All right, I want everybody in the room. I want senior leadership, I want teachers, I want parents, I want everybody you can get into a room because I want to ask them the most important question, which is, "So what are our goals? What are our goals as a district?"

So I got in there and I said, "What are our goals?" And they kind of looked at me and I said, "Why the silence?" I was like, "I know I'm new, you don't know me." I said, No, no, really, what are our goals?" They said, "Well, we don't have any." I said, "What do you mean you don't have any?" "Oh, well, we have a strategic plan, but nobody listens to that." I'm sure you've heard that before, we don't really care. But what it is what's our goal?

I said, "Well, what do you want the goal to be?" And they looked. I said, "Well, what's one number that you think matters more that is a good amalgam of 13 years?" They said, "Oh, graduation." I said, "Great. So graduation."

They were like, "Great. What's the next one?" I said, "No, no, no, not the next one. How much?" They said, "75." I said, "It's a little low." Somebody said, "95," everybody's, "Ah, that's too high." Somebody said, "85," I said, "Yeah, that's right."

And they said, "Okay, what's next?" I said, "No, no, no, when? When?" "Oh, oh, we have to have a time limited, I got it." And so, they said, "In 2025, 5 years." And then, somebody, actually, the president of the principal's union said, "85 by '25." And everybody started to applaud. And I said, okay, that's our goal.

And then, we got one for attendance, 90 by '25. Then it was increased enrollment. And I said, "Okay, that's our goals now. That's what we are going to do. We created this together. Now our job is to make sure everybody knows it." So if you go to the website at Lansing Schools, the bottom of every page says the three goals. When you walk into the boardroom, right there, it has the goals and the mission statement.

It's all about making sure that people buy in, that they care about it, they own it. And when they own it, the culture of high expectations is part of them. That's what happens is when you do stuff on high, just like shutting down schools, when they don't feel like they're part of the game, they're just

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like, "Oh, those suits from downtown." But now, every single person in that room, every teacher, every parent, whoever was there, and then, they tell their friends, they say, "Oh, this is our goal. This is what we're going to do."

And so, we need to just be very clear about picking what do we want to do to move this district? Have it be co-created, put it on the wall. And every decision we make, when we're thinking about funding, when we're thinking about hiring, we say, "Will this move the graduation? Will this move attendance? Will this move lowering the vacancies? Will this lower the number of one-star schools?" That's how you do it.

Because if you start to say, "Well, we've got goals," it doesn't do anything. "Oh, I'm going to hold people accountable," what does that mean? Right? "The beatings will stop and we'll commence until morale gets better," you can't do that, you can't force people into doing stuff. They want to believe that they are part of it, and when you empower them to do that, and then give them the resources and then see your actions, are saying, "No, no, don't worry about the noise. Don't worry about... Yeah, yeah, I know graduation, right? Great, let's focus on that."

You're clear, you're concise, you're cogent, you have the people that buy into it, you will be amazed how quickly we'll move, because then, the extraneous decisions that you focus on, you don't have to deal with because you're saying, "Does this move graduation? Does this move attendance? Does this move one-star schools to five-star schools? No? Then maybe we don't have to focus on it."

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Cavazos.

Trustee Cavazos:

Thank you, Madam President. Good evening, Dr. Shuldiner. Can you specifically describe your leadership philosophy and how it aligns with diverse needs of CCSD, including how this leadership style would successfully work with the board of trustees' balanced governance policies?

Ben Shuldiner:

Well, thank you for the question. As you heard me say last time, I really am a Ferrari, and I believe in co-construction. I love that you voted 7-0 for balanced governance, that means a lot to me, it's one of the reasons why I applied, because my philosophy is always we are in this together. Because let me tell you, it is a hard job. And if I wanted to do this by myself, I couldn't do it, that is ridiculous.

And so, one of the things about my philosophy is we have to buy in together, we have to work together. The diversity of Clark County makes it great. And if you're only having a couple of people in the room, you're not going to listen to the entire community. And so, you've got to make sure that you bring everybody to the table.

I'll try to give you some specifics about my actual leadership. When I got to Lansing, the first thing, no joke, the first thing they said to me was, "What do you want to do with your office?" I said, "What

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do you mean?" They said, "Well, every superintendent gets \$20,000 a year to redo their office." I say, "Who cares?" They said, "No, no, no, every superintendent..." I said, "Take the money, give it to the kids. That's not what we're here for." They said, "Are you sure?" I said, "Absolutely. What do you think my job is?" And so, I haven't touched my office in four years, it is the same couch.

But the other thing that I found was, when I got to the office, to get to the superintendent's desk, you had to go through three separate doors, the superintendent tried to stay as far away from the world as possible. I gave up the entire office. What do I do? I work at a conference table. I work in a big room with lots of doors and lots of coffee. And everybody knows that if they walk down the hallway and they see that door open and I'm there, they're going to come in, they're going to say hi, they're going to ask me questions, they're going to be there. And then, there'll be lots of people at the table.

My leadership style is we are all in this together. A lot of people talk that game, but when you give up your office and you actually sit at a conference table all day long, or not all day long, because I'm in the schools a lot too, is that when they see that door open, they come in and it sets this tone where now I'm not the guy behind the desk, I'm Ben, I'm the superintendent that they can come to.

And I can tell, parents will come and they'll just peek their head in there, "Oh, Ben, you're here?" "Yeah, come on and have a cup of coffee." They're sitting with the superintendent, but really, they're sitting with somebody that cares about their family.

And so, everything I've ever done is to bring people together, to really create a culture where everybody is together. And so, from my leadership style, I mean, the fact that you want to do balanced governance, that's great, I love that. I can't wait to get into those conversations. But the way that I also work, of course, is we empower people. And so, when they come to the office, I'm not making decisions alone, we're working in groups, we're owning the work.

It is odd sometimes, I mean, my leadership style is very, very collaborative, and not everybody's used to that from a superintendent, but I can tell you that because we've done that, everybody in the district then owns a piece of something and then they actually move forward. And then, they come to me for support and help and guidance, rather than, "Oh my God, he's going to be angry," or, "Oh my God, I didn't do something." So that's my leadership style.

Trustee Cavazos:

Thank you, sir.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Second round, it would be Trustee Dominguez.

Trustee Dominguez:

Thank you. Regarding proficiencies with math and reading, would you support grade retention, summer school, mandatory tutoring to increase those proficiencies?

Ben Shuldiner:

Yeah, so here's the thing, you can say everybody's got to go to tutoring, but if those were kids that weren't going to school in the first place, it's unclear if that's going to be helpful. But I think what a school district's going to have to do is really highlight the students that need the most help and create programs that really fit for them.

So what we did in Lansing, again, I got there, proficiency rates were super low, and we said, all right, if you're in eighth grade and you failed both major classes, English and math, we did not send you to high school. Now a fourth grader going to fifth grade, there's a lot of research that says you probably shouldn't hold kids back, but there's no research that says an eighth grader should go to ninth grade if they haven't done their work.

So what do we do is we created summer programs and we said, look, if you can get your credit for English and math over summer, you get to go to ninth grade. You finally have something kids want, right? The kid that maybe had checked out, they say, "Aye, but I'm just going to ninth grade," now they want to go to ninth grade. Well, now you say, look, you want to go to ninth grade, you got to do English and math here.

But what we also, of course, did is we didn't treat it like a traditional school. We made sure that class sizes were small. We made sure that there was extra tutoring. We made sure that they got extra support. We also brought them snacks. I mean, we did everything we could. We worked with the parents.

And what happened, the number of eighth graders that failed English and math going into ninth grade almost became zero. Because what we finally said to the families and to the kids is, maybe the junior high school really wasn't working for you, but we believe that you can do it, and we're going to create a summer program that's built for you because we know you want to get to high school.

It is rare that an eighth grader says, "You know what? I don't want to go to high school." That kid, there might be a lot of other issues, and then you got to support them. But in terms of mandating things, mandating anything, what you want to make sure of is if you mandate it, if nobody comes, what's the point? So you got to know your people, you got to know your kids, you've got to know your families. Maybe you got to talk about having the classes near where the kids live rather than the school that they might have to travel to.

You've got to be really thoughtful about what's your end result? You want kids to be proficient in math and science and English and history, whatever it is. And then you say, well, why aren't they doing it? What's the roadblocks? It can't be a kind of a one-size-fits-all because clearly, what the district was trying to do wasn't working in the first place. But what am I certainly in support of is making sure that kids that are behind are given as many resources and many opportunities to get on track, if not ahead of schedule.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

And that ends our time. Thank you so much, Mr. Shuldiner, for your time with us. We are grateful.

I do want to let the audience know that this is not an action item, so there is no public comment on that. I ask Mr. Caruso, our board liaison, there was two individuals that signed up for public comment on this section, but you may want to speak on 4.01 instead.

So with that, thank you. We're going to take a five-minute recess and we are going to then resume with our last candidate.

Recess: 7:13 p.m.

Reconvene: 7:20 p.m.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

We have our third candidate. Thank you, Mr. Welsh, for joining us. The way that it's going to work is all 11 of us have at least one question. The goal is to have the trustee be concise in their ask, then have you be concise in your response, and up to four minutes total. If they do not use all the four minutes, they can ask a follow-up question on their question. If not, we'll move on to the next person. We are going to start with the district A, and that is our Trustee Stevens is up.

Trustee Stevens:

Good evening.

Jesse Welsh:

Good evening.

Trustee Stevens:

Hey, good evening. What fundamental challenges does CCSD face in regard to special education, and what solutions would you bring to remedy those challenges?

Jesse Welsh:

Sure. Thank you, Trustee Stevens, for the question there. A few things that I've observed. One is there has been a trend both here in Clark County and nationally in terms of increasing percentages of students being identified as special ed., so that is something we definitely need to be mindful of. When I think about that and of course the impact that has, we really need to make sure that we have solid guidelines and training for our staff in terms of identifying students and providing RTI response to intervention for our students to make sure that we are trying to address those needs prior to identifying those students as needing an IEP specifically. Another area, in particular when I think about our special education, is our vacancies. It is one of our areas that we've had a historically higher vacancy rate in. One of the things that I'm certainly encouraged by and hopeful that we can continue is working with CCA.

Jesse Welsh:

We were able to identify special education as well as some of our Title 1 schools for an additional stipend, that \$5,000, to be able to help fill those positions. We know from looking at our data that actually has had a very positive impact, and so ensuring that we are able to fill those positions with quality candidates obviously is going to have a big impact in terms of being able to address the needs of our students. One other thing that is important to point out here is as we are looking at our board agendas over the last couple of years, we've seen an increase in some of those legal cases that have been coming forward that are tied to special education. We need to...

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Mr. Welsh...

Jesse Welsh:

Go ahead, I'm sorry.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

I'm sorry. If you could speak into the mic because our people paying attention online could not hear you.

Jesse Welsh:

Absolutely.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you.

Jesse Welsh:

I will get a little closer. No problem. Looking at our board agendas for the last couple of years, we've seen an increase in terms of some of these cases that are coming up to a higher level, and it's important that we try to identify some of the root causes as to why those are occurring and to try to mitigate some of those things. That might help us obviously be able to save those resources that we can better address the needs of our special education students.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. You do have time for follow up. One minute.

Trustee Stevens:

Awesome, thanks. You mentioned training for staff. What would that look like? What kind of training are you talking about when you're discussing that?

Jesse Welsh:

Yeah, specifically, it's making sure that our teachers and our building leaders understand how to implement a response to intervention and RTI process solidly in their buildings. That's the process that we engage in prior to identifying a student as potentially needing an IEP for special education. The intent with that is to try to provide as much support and resources outside of a special education setting to make that student successful so that perhaps we may not have to go to an IEP to meet that student's needs. It would be training, working with our staff within our SSD division and our curriculum professional development to make sure that folks understand how to effectively implement that process.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

Thank you, Dr. Welsh. My question, I'm going to go straight to it. Can you provide an example of how you managed a significant crisis in a previous leadership role? Provide a specific explanation of how you mitigated the situation, and what were your key lessons learned?

Jesse Welsh:

Absolutely, and thank you, Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan. Certainly, the COVID-19 pandemic was a challenge for all of us. It was obviously not unique here to just Clark County. I mean, it was nationwide. In Arizona where I was at the time, was one of the states that was hardest hit for many months during the pandemic. Some of the things that I learned as takeaways, one was the importance of over-communicating and engaging with our stakeholder communities in terms of what was going on. We were very active in sharing information about how we were responding to the situation in terms of things both with curriculum, with providing meals for students, with providing supports at campuses.

I was very proud of the work that we did in our district where even coming back into August, we provided all of our students with the opportunity to either be online or to even be in person just depending upon their comfort level. That was something that was a little bit unique to the environment in Arizona. That was actually something that was mandated really by the governor, and so we met that need. Then, also just engaging very heavily with our experts, with others around our community. I worked very closely with other superintendents that were in the area so that we could coordinate our efforts, identify what was happening in our communities, and try to be as consistent as possible in terms of our approach because we recognized that whatever happened in one district was probably going to happen in other districts. We needed to try and be as consistent as much as possible and communicate with one another as things changed.

We tried to make decisions based on data. One of the things that, again, was a little bit unique perhaps to Arizona was the health department was pushing out data in terms of the cases and hospitalizations. We were basing our actions on real-time data as what was happening in our districts in order to best respond to that situation. Again, I think one of the key things was that choice element, really providing families with choices based on what was really going to work for

Jesse Welsh:

them. For a lot of our students who were in special education, they were just back in person. We knew there was really no effective way to meet the needs of many of our special ed. students without them being in person.

It was a challenge, obviously, to have teachers... Especially when we were in that environment before there was a vaccination. It wasn't even on the horizon, and it didn't necessarily feel super safe, but we knew that that was the only way we were going to meet the needs of our students, and so we worked with our teachers to put as many precautions as we could in place to support those students as well as for students that we knew needed to be in person. That was one thing I learned. I also learned there's nothing more important than high school football, so that was a good lesson. That was one. I will tell you in Arizona that it rolled out very quickly in terms of football. There was nothing that was going to stop high school football. I say some jest there, but

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. You have 45 seconds.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

Thank you, Dr. Welsh for that. I will attest. High school football is extremely important.

Jesse Welsh:

That's right.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

Looking on that situation, you talked about real strategically what you did, but now knowing what you know in hindsight, would you have done anything differently?

Jesse Welsh:

Absolutely. I think all of us, if we knew now what we knew then about COVID-19 and how it worked, I mean, it would've changed our whole approach. Frankly, we could have continued much more in person with appropriate precautions in place like masking and been able to continue without there being as much risk to our students and to our teachers. I'm proud of the fact that we did everything that we could to protect the safety of everybody, especially not knowing what we knew at that point in time and how that information was constantly changing. Yeah, absolutely, we would all approach things very differently if we knew then what we know now.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Dominguez.

Trustee Dominguez:

Good evening.

Jesse Welsh:
Good evening.

Trustee Dominguez:

How would you foster a culture of respect and support among staff and teachers, ensuring they feel valued and empowered in their roles?

Jesse Welsh:

Yes, thank you, Trustee Dominguez. A couple of things there. One, we need to trust our teachers as experts in their field and empower them to be the experts in the classroom. One of the things I know I've heard from talking to many teachers across the district over the last several months is while we have very good curriculum in place, which was something that was desperately needed in the district, we've been a little too tight in terms of our expectations of literally making sure that people are on the same lesson, on the same paragraph of that lesson at the exact same time. We need to allow our teachers to be able to take that content and be able to adapt to the needs of the students that are in front of them, so that they can better meet the needs of those students.

Another thing when I think about really valuing our teachers is, as much as possible, taking things off of their plate. So much of the work that's happening in schools is just adding extra layers of complexity and work that's not adding to really what they got into teaching for, which is to teach students. Again, I'll give an example of that. When teachers are having to put multiple versions of standards on the board, I got to tell you, I don't know how honestly that is having an impact on student learning. It's just extra work, and those are simple things that we can do. The accumulation of many of these small things can add time back into the teacher's day as well as provide them with more value.

Some of the other things are really valuing our teachers and making sure they have opportunities for input, so making sure that they're actively engaged with our SOTs, that we have teachers that are part of any district committees that we're engaging with teachers as we're talking about the effectiveness of our programs, making sure that we're listening to our teachers. They're the people that are on the front lines doing the work. They're the people who know what's going on with that. We need to respect that and really be able to listen to our teachers. Then, some of the other things are just being out as active in schools. As superintendent, the best way to find out what's going on is to be on the ground floor and really engaging with the trustees and with the board. We're out looking at schools, so we can get a better feel of exactly what's happening in our schools. That's where you're going to get that ground level information and really understand what's going on.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

One minute for follow up if you need.

Trustee Dominguez:

I'd like to preserve the minute.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Okay. Trustee Barron.

Trustee Barron:

Thank you, Madam Superintendent. Dr. Welsh... Well, he is a superintendent of his district there, right? [inaudible 02:28:54]. Well, it's a long night. It's been a long night. Dr. Welsh, I just want to tell you, thank you very much for showing up last night to Rancho High School and thank you very much for recognizing the 70-year plus, heated, but very friendly rivalry with Las Vegas High School.

Jesse Welsh:

Yes, you note I was wearing my green.

Trustee Barron:

Thank you. Right answer. That's the right answer, but in all seriousness, how do you plan to address the issue of attracting and retaining fully licensed classroom teachers to the underserved schools in the urban core to East Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, and other hard to fill positions throughout the district in an attainable, sustainable manner? Of course, past examples of your success in similar situations most certainly would be very encouraged, and it'd be nice to hear it.

Jesse Welsh:

Absolutely. Thank you, Trustee Barron. I was very fortunate in my role in Paradise Valley where we were very well known in the valley as a district that treated our teachers very well. In many aspects, it almost sold itself and that's really a testament to the work that had been done in that district for years leading up to that. It would be great that we could get to that same kind of level where teachers feel like this is a place where they can feel valued and supported. That's just the best way to market. You build success upon success. Some specific things though... Number one, people quit bosses, they don't quit jobs, so we've got to make sure that the culture and climate that's happening in our buildings is supportive of our teachers and that our teachers feel supported and valued by our building leaders.

When I think about bringing new talent into the district, we have got to be able to streamline and reduce that process in every way possible. I was talking to Ms. Triana, who's our head of HR recently as we were going around with the rooms here, and we recognized there's got to be ways that we can take things off of that. If it's not something that's required in statute and it's preventing us from getting people in a quick manner, then we need to look at that. We're not the only person out there. You have people that are coming out of university. If they're coming from a different district, they're going to be applying to multiple locations. We've got to be able to be quick on the spot as much as possible to be able to get folks through the process so that this becomes the first offer that they get and the offer that they take.

Some other things I mentioned before talking about those stipends to help support getting teachers into some of our most at-risk schools, again, we saw very positive data with that where it was

Jesse Welsh:

somewhere around a 50% reduction in vacancies in those schools because of those stipends in place. That's a great opportunity where we can go back to the legislature and say that the SB 231 funds worked for us. We need to be able to continue that kind of work and actually expand that because, as you guys know, those funds ran out. We knew that there was a limit to those funds, so if we can get those funds to be able to go further and by having more of those funds... We just had more people in those positions than we thought we would have. That's going to help us to reduce our openings.

Then, it just comes back to our targeted recruiting, so making sure that we are recruiting teachers in places where we know that we're going to get the teachers that will help align to the needs of our communities. Kids will do better with teachers that they can connect with, and that they can relate to. There's very few males in the teaching profession, generally speaking, a little more maybe in secondary, not so much in elementary, but we know that we need to be looking at targeting for specific populations as well as growing our own programs with our teach programs that we have at many of our schools through our CTE programs. Really building those up and creating that pipeline where our own students can complete those programs, finish their degree, and then come back to teach for CCSD.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you, Trustee Henry.

Trustee Henry:

Thank you, Dr. Welsh. Specifically, what are some innovative programs that you would implement to ensure that student voices are heard, valued, and utilized at the district level?

Jesse Welsh:

Yes, thank you, Trustee Henry. A couple of things... I know we do have a Superintendent Student Advisory Council. I don't know how active that has been, but I would say that is certainly something that we need to make sure that we are leveraging actively and effectively. That's a great opportunity to have a standing group of students that are providing input to the decisions that are happening in the district. Another one is really just looking at some of our student data as we're looking at some of our specific programs like how our grading policy is working, how some of our discipline policies are working perhaps, to hear those student voices and identify what kinds of things are working or not working. It's also important to make sure that we have student input on any major committees that we have. We do have some committees that are standing committees within the district but again, if we're putting together anything where we're looking at our grading policy or if we're talking about technology, having those student voices on there is a critical piece to making sure that we have that.

Then, it kind of goes back to something I said earlier, getting into schools and actually talking to students. It's not just talking to principals and talking to teachers. It's also talking to our students, finding out what's going on, and engaging with those students that are on SOTs at the secondary level to make sure that we're hearing those voices through that venue as well.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. You have one minute left. Do you like to ask a follow-up?

Trustee Henry:

How would you attract those students? I know that you said that you would get into the schools. If you do find out that the superintendent... The council with the students, how would you attract those students from various backgrounds?

Jesse Welsh:

Yeah, I think that's really working with our school principals, having them help identify and really making sure that we're getting a wide representation from all of our schools, so that the constituency of that group reflects our district.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Johnson.

Trustee Johnson:

Hey, Mr. Welsh, good evening. Oh, forgot my question. Screen. Sorry. Yep, thanks. Always good [inaudible 02:35:23] help me out. All right. How would you work with our vendors, nonprofits in the business community to create valuable partnerships? Then, how would you manage those partnerships to ensure desired outcomes are being met?

Jesse Welsh:

Yes, absolutely. Thank you, Trustee Johnson. One of the main things is making sure that we're looking at those programs and things that we have through our vendors, looking at the usage, the impact, the cost of those, what's the ROI that we're getting on those. If we see things are working great, let's keep with that. If we're seeing things that are not working, then let's adjust or let's reallocate those resources. I believe it also is really vital to build relationships and partnerships where we can, where the goals of our outside business community and our community partners align with the district and really engaging in those and building those up. It's funny. As I was just driving here, I saw Project 150 right down the road. It's a great example of those kinds of partnerships to support our students and really building that into our strategic planning as we're working.

If we have specific things that we're trying to achieve as part of our strategic plan, it makes it very easy for us to have a lens in terms of gatekeeping who we work with because we want to make sure that those partnerships are aligned to the things that we're trying to accomplish and not taking us off into a tangent somewhere where it's not necessarily something that we're trying to do. I believe it's also important that we have outcomes with our partnerships, and that's part of our MOUs as we're building MOUs with outside entities. As we were talking with some of our folks in the county commission with the city of Las Vegas this morning, we were talking about open schools, open doors. We were talking about working closely in terms of some of our building

Jesse Welsh:

planning and trying to plan safe routes for schools and some of the traffic flow. Those are great opportunities of how we need to be engaging with our stakeholders in those processes. Then, like I said, just growing and supporting those programs that are working in the district.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

You have one minute for follow-up.

Trustee Johnson:

Our core is teaching and learning. That's what we do best. Do you see any areas where nonprofits could probably... where we could outsource some of our current non-teaching and learning things to external partners?

Jesse Welsh:

Yeah, absolutely. A really good example of that is anything that I would characterize as a wraparound service at schools. That's something where we don't necessarily excel as well. I'm talking about not just programming before and after school. You think of things like Safekey, but as well as ways that we can help make sure that kids have things that they need, clothing, food, all of those kinds of things. Yeah, there's definitely opportunities. Mental health, that would be another great example. It's, again, working with those partners to identify what they're able to provide, what they can help us with, and really working in partnership on that.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Zamora.

Trustee Zamora:

Thank you. Good afternoon. Good evening. It's after 6:00. What would be your main areas of focus in a strategic plan for our district, and what initiatives would you want to own and lead? The second part of that question is what steps will you take to achieve that vision?

Jesse Welsh:

Yes, thank you, Trustee Zamora. First of all, it's very important that the superintendent is an active part of the strategic plan. It's very important. People can see how you lead by your own actions. If a leader is a part of that work and they're engaging with that work, they're not just delegating things out, that's got to be a key part of it. Obviously, the superintendent can't do everything themselves. They need a strong team, so you've got to rely on that team but specifically, I have, obviously, some thoughts on that.

It was in my 100-day plan, which I know was a part of our documents here this evening. I believe this is a great opportunity for us as a district with the Focus 2024 plan phased out, I would say, at this point. 2024 was last year, so this is a great opportunity to engage both internally and externally with our stakeholders to develop a comprehensive strategic plan for the next five years. The benefit

Jesse Welsh:

of that is sometimes you have to go slow in order to go fast. What I mean by that is if we build that plan with our stakeholders and with everybody that's a part of that work, we have a clear path moving forward as an organization, as a community where we know exactly where we want to go and how we're going to get there, and it makes that work so much faster.

In terms of some areas of that, obviously things that I would anticipate would be part of a strategic plan. Academics has got to be a part of that. Looking at disproportionality, it's got to be a part of that. I would say climate and culture would be another piece. Certainly looking at our finance and operations and making sure we have those solid up and then engagement and communication with our community. Again, I'm not trying to put the cart before the horse because part of the important process of developing a strategic plan is to have those areas of focus develop organically, but having developed strategic plans back in PV and previously, I think those are some ones that I would anticipate seeing.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

You have one minute for follow-up.

Trustee Zamora:

I'm okay, thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Satory.

Trustee Satory:

Hello. How would you handle public criticism and media scrutiny while maintaining transparency and trust?

Jesse Welsh:

Yes. Thank you, Trustee Satori. It comes out to being open, honest, and accountable, not hiding, dodging requests. That's been an issue that we've had in the past as a district, and the only way to build trust is to reestablish that trust moving forward. Another area that we could really focus on is over communication in terms of some of the things that are happening in the district and sometimes when we make decisions that may be difficult decisions. There's a concept out there when you're messaging of seven times messaging. People don't necessarily hear the message the first time, maybe not even the second or third time. Sometimes, it takes up to seven times of messaging in different formats and in different ways to be able to get people to hear that message, so it's not enough for us to just say something once.

We can't just push it out in a parent newsletter or say something at a board meeting. We've got to make sure that we're saying it multiple times. It's also important to explain the why. People may or may not agree with a decision, but if they understand why that decision was made, it goes a long way in helping to support that decision. I know our why is almost always because it's the best thing

Jesse Welsh:

for kids. It's got to be what we're focused on, so if we can explain why our decisions are the best thing for kids, that helps us in terms of working with our community in helping to understand why we do some of the things that we do. I believe another piece that's also very important is our solidarity as a team, as a board, working with the superintendent, working with our staff.

I hear this, again, I've been in the district for a very long time, and I hear staff sometimes talk about, "Well, the district did this. The district..." Well, who is this district? We are the district, right? When we've made a decision, we've got to own that decision and say, "No, no, no, it's not 'the district made that decision.' We made that decision as a district, and here's why we made that decision." We can have those conversations and discussions here in the boardroom, here with our principals, but when we walk out of that room, we've got to stand behind that decision and be able to support it as a team.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Biassotti.

Trustee Biassotti:

Hi. Good evening, Mr. [inaudible 02:43:05]. I mean, I'm sorry, Mr. Welsh. Within 90 days, President Trump plans to introduce a strategy to eliminate federal funds for illegal indoctrination based on gender and equity ideologies. Given these developments, do you believe students can receive a meaningful education and foster unity through a patriotic curriculum that instills shared values? Would you preemptively remove programs like DEI and gender support plans such as Policy 5138, or wait for the legal outcomes of the ongoing conflict between the federal administration and local governments? If courts uphold the president's authority, will you eliminate the equity and diversity department to continue to receive federal funds?

Jesse Welsh:

Thank you, Trustee Biassotti. Number one, we have to make sure that all students feel safe and welcome at school. That's a big piece. Our students are not going to learn if they don't feel like they're safe at school physically and emotionally, so that's an important piece that we need to make sure that we recognize.

I would also note that as superintendent, one of the things that is very critical is ensuring that we have stability in terms of how we're approaching things. We can't be constantly changing on things very rapidly. It's very disruptive to our teachers, to our building leaders, so we've got to make sure that we're making clear decisions moving forward. I say that to say when we have actions going with an executive order, and as you pointed out, there's definitely some back and forth happening in legal realms with that, the onus is on us to make sure that we are keeping that disruption away from our schools until that has been solved and decided. I would also point out that there continues to be movement on that.

One thing I would note is that when the Department of Education issued updated guidance on the 28th, they noted that schools with particular... Actually, I'll quote it. It's, "Schools with programs

Jesse Welsh:

focused on interests in particular cultures, heritages, or areas of the world would not, in and of themselves, violate Title 6," assuming they're open to all students regardless of race. That's an important thing for us to be thinking about as we're thinking about the work that happens in our district. I would also say, as you mentioned, Policy 5138, it's not just our policy, it's also rooted in state law, and we are, of course, required to state law. Then, I wrap all of that up to say whether we like or dislike laws that are passed, it is our obligation to follow laws that are passed, so obviously if there's anything that's coming down in terms of law or in terms of case law, we're going to follow those.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Have one minute for follow-up if you want to.

Trustee Biassotti:

Yes. Is there any circumstance in which you would choose to forego federal funds?

Jesse Welsh:

Great question. One area in particular, we are very reliant on federal funds. It represents a significant portion of our budget to the extent that if we were not to have those, it would create a significant disruption for all of our schools. That's part of the reason that the Department of Education at the federal level is structured the way it is. It's effectively a lever to make sure that states through states school districts are complying with those requirements in alignment with those funds. I really can't foresee a way that we would want to operate without those funds in place. It would just be too much of a disruption on our district. I would say, and again, this is something I outlined in my 100-day plan, we need to be proactive and make sure that we have some plans in our back pocket should there be a disruption or a termination of federal funding. Again, I would hope that does not occur, but we need to be prepared for that, especially given some of the things that we know are happening right now in Washington.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. My question is, what steps would you take to establish a culture of high expectations for both students and personnel in CCSD?

Jesse Welsh:

Yes, thank you, President Bustamante Adams. A couple of things there. I believe it's about having the right structure and the right people in each seat in our organization, having clear roles, responsibilities, and making sure that our goals are smart goals with a high emphasis on that R in SMART. If you know that acronym, SMART, the R is realistic, would be what that is, and I'll give more context there. When I think about our Focus 2024 plan, I believe there were a lot of targets in that plan that may have been very lofty, but they were not realistic. A great example of that is one of the goals that was in Focus 2024 was that a hundred percent of our schools would be three star

Jesse Welsh:

or greater by 2024. I would love for that to happen, but I will say I don't think that's the realistic goal.

We need to make sure that our goals are realistic, and that we have benchmarking and course corrections in place so that it's not just something where we do a post-mortem at the end of a year, let's say, and say, "Well, this is what happened. Now what are we going to do?" That we have benchmarks at certain periods of time so we can see our progress towards those goals. It also comes down to support, training, and resources for success, and then just regular monitoring of that progress towards expectations. Give people the autonomy, the information, the resources they need to be able to implement, and then hold them accountable for the results. How they choose to get there, that's partially up to them, but we need to hold them accountable for those results.

It's also important that we set outcomes. I know I said this before, but at the outset so that we can know what are we looking for in terms of the outcomes when we get to the end goal. Grading policy, cell phone policy, those are two really good examples where we've rolled out plans, but we didn't necessarily identify what our end game was, what is it that we were trying to achieve, how do we know that those initiatives were a success? Doing that at the outset so that we don't get to the end and have to kind of figure out like, "Hey, did it work or not?"

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Cavazos.

Trustee Cavazos:

Thank you, Madam President. I'll just say that after I ask the question, I'm going to leave my light on because being District G, I haven't gotten asked any follow-up questions because then everybody jumps into the queue as soon as I'm done. I'm just going to say that right now. Good evening, Dr. Welsh. Can you specifically describe your leadership philosophy, and how it aligns with the diverse needs of CCSD? Please include how your leadership style would successfully work with the Board of Trustees Balanced Governance policies.

Jesse Welsh:

Yes, thank you, Trustee Cavazos. I believe we need a strong leadership team, and we need to get their input. I believe that we make better decisions when we involve...

... input. I believe that we make better decisions when we involve all of the right people at the table. You have those varying perspectives. I'll give a good example of that. I remember when I was a principal at Thurman White Middle School, and we were embarking on becoming an international baccalaureate school at that time.

And I remember going into a meeting with, it wasn't a SOT back then, but it was effectively a SOT. It was our empowerment team. It was kind of a precursor to that. And I remember going into meeting with them thinking, "Oh, I've got this ironed out. I've got it nailed." We came out of that meeting with such better approach to how we were solving it because we involved all of the people that were part of that, and listened to those people in terms of how we approached it.

Jesse Welsh:

So, I think that's a vital perspective in terms of how we operate, is making sure that we are listening to the stakeholders that are part of that decision, getting their input, and then moving forward with that decision and making sure that it's aligned with our strategic plan and our theory of action for resolving that. And then, like I said before, moving forward as a team, once we've made a decision as a team, we don't second-guess ourselves. We move forward with that.

We can second-guess later down the road and say, "Hey, is it working?" But we don't second-guess that decision based on whatever conversation that we had in the room. I believe it's really important to hire good people, give them the resources, the information that they need, get out of their way and let them know what you're expecting in terms of results. I just say that's my leadership style.

I also believe that decisions should be made at the lowest possible level within the organization. So, if it's something that is truly something that should be decided at a school level, then we should be letting schools make that decision. There are some things that we need to hold tight as a district, but there are other things that we don't need to hold tight as a district, and we need to let that happen at a school level closest to the students because those who are at that school know and understand the needs of their community and their students best.

And then, I do want to touch on balanced governance. I really enjoyed my time with Dr. Alsbury that last week. I recall when CCSD first started to implement balanced governing before we kind of veered away from it. And I do believe that too many things were deemed operational in the past, and we need to get back to that balance.

One of the things that really resonated with me that Dr. Alsbury shared was really focusing on discussions about our strategic plan and about student achievement. Bless you. Here in the boardroom, that's where we need to be spending our time and focusing on, and that's how we can be most effective.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

You have one minute left. Trustee?

Trustee Cavazos:

Thank you. And again, I don't know how this happens, but my follow-up question, he just answered half of it already, and that was how specifically, and again, he, Dr. Walsh just started, would you implement operational protocols that would ensure that central office policies do not interfere with school-level autonomy for all student-based outcomes? And I'm going to go ahead and defer the time to someone else because I believe he just answered the question. So, thank you so much.

Jesse Welsh:

Thank you

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you, Trustee Henry.

Trustee Henry:

Thank you, Dr. Welsh. What do you do about compacting salaries for veteran educators?

Jesse Welsh:

Yes. Thank you, Trustee Henry. Great question. I know even in just speaking with some of the other groups here this evening, it's definitely an issue that we have. So, I believe it is something... And again, I would be working with the board and on the board's guidance on that, but I do believe it is something that we need to be considering as we're talking about contract negotiations with our labor groups, particularly to make sure that we're addressing some of those issues with wage compression with our experienced educators.

Trustee Henry:

Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Dominguez.

Trustee Dominguez:

Thank you. So, my question is regarding proficiencies in math and reading, would you support having mandatory summer school of grade retention or mandatory tutoring?

Jesse Welsh:

Mm-hmm, mandatory. So, I have some mixed thoughts on that. The issue being the word mandatory there. I do think that when we're seeing that students are not achieving at the levels that they should be, we need to be providing interventions to help support those kids, whether it be afterschool tutoring, whether it be summer programs. We're not doing what we need to if we're just ignoring that problem and thinking it's somehow going to get solved the next year.

I think the challenge just becomes the mandatory. And again, it depends on the grade level. Families have a lot of things that are happening in the summer, and particularly when I think of students in the secondary level, a lot of those students might be high school working jobs. But I do definitely support that idea to the extent possible with the resources that we have as a district, and for schools within their strategic budgets to make sure that we have something in place to address those needs, because not doing something is obviously not going to solve that problem.

Trustee Dominguez:

Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan. And then, we'll have seven minutes left.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

Okay. Dr. Welsh, so because we have seven minutes, I'm going to give a little story. We were up a lot having great conversations last week. Some of the trustees went to Carson. So, my question for you is very specific because you mentioned ROI throughout your responses. So, what is our argument to our elected officials knowing that we are in such budget challenges? What is our ROI to go back to them and convince them that we need to continue the funding? And what would you do differently that may be what has not been done in the district? I know it's a loaded question.

Jesse Welsh:

No, that's a great question.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

Okay.

Jesse Welsh:

Thank you, Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan. And so, I think one of the areas that we've been very successful in, and I think it is a successful strategy to continue to pursue as we're working with the legislature, is to really target funds towards specific outcomes and goals. For those who've been around the district long enough, you remember Zoom and Victory in particular, SB 185 funds, I think they got called something else later on. But those were very targeted to address the needs of specific populations.

And we were able to over time, continually demonstrate progress using those funds to address the needs of those populations. That's really what helped us to get to the pupil-centered funding plan in the end, because those then got baked into per pupil weights where those same kind of supports then become baked into the formula. And that's part of how you have to use those funds to meet those needs for those individual populations.

So, going up with some targeted strategies in terms of needs that we have, identifying those needs and the specific funds to meet those needs, and then letting the results do that talking. I think that's a really good effective strategy that could help us at the legislature as opposed to just going up and asking for a blank check.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Cavazos.

Trustee Cavazos:

Thank you, Madam President. Dr. Welsh, one of the things that we are most criticized for as a district, meaning superintendent and the board of trustees, is that our messaging is really bad. The timing is bad, the content is bad. We don't do a good job. And sometimes, I think that the criticism is really unwarranted because I believe that our communications team works hard, but I also think that sometimes we can do better. But in such a large district, it's difficult. How do you see yourself being part of that improvement?

Jesse Welsh:

Yes. Thank you, Trustee Cavazos. So, I think it comes back to leveraging multiple avenues and opportunities when we're communicating out to our community and using all of those resources. And you're right, I know that our communications team is working very hard to make sure that we're pushing out information and sharing things with our community, and with our families. But it can't just be in one specific avenue.

So, making sure that we're leveraging our parent newsletter, making sure we're reaching out to the media and the press that we're putting things out on websites, that we're sending out information to our schools so they can then share with families. It's got to be... It comes back to that idea that seven times messaging. We may feel like we've communicated it well, but if people are telling us that we haven't, then we probably have more work to do in terms of making sure we're hitting it from multiple perspectives.

Trustee Cavazos:

Okay. Thank you so much.

Jesse Welsh:

Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Satory.

Trustee Satory:

Yes, thank you. The leadership profile highlights a concern about initiative fatigue due to constant changes in programming, new superintendent, all of those things that change, how would you ensure continuity and focus on what works?

Jesse Welsh:

Yes. Thank you for the question, Trustee Satory. So, yeah, that's definitely an issue. Again, it kind of comes back to something I said earlier in terms of one of the important roles of the superintendent is staying the ship and keeping consistency. We can't just veer off to the side for anything shiny that may be popping up for us.

So, making sure that we are focusing on our Tier 1, our Tier 2 instruction, our supports, and perfecting on that, looking at the programs that we already have to make sure that they're working. If they are, let's make sure that people are using them effectively and well-trained on them, and that we're not trying to add additional complexities onto people's place. Where there are opportunities for doing something innovative, I think you have to be very strategic about that.

And again, I'll give the example. When we switched over to Google, I mean, that was a perfect opportunity. Our existing system was dying. I mean, literally going end of life and not supported, that's the perfect opportunity to implement something new. So, you don't just insert something new

Jesse Welsh:

because you see something that you like per se. It's when there's an opportunity to be able to then implement something that's going to meet an existing need.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Three minutes left for questions. So, Trustee Barron.

Trustee Barron:

Oh, yes. Thank you very much, Madam President. Yes, kind of like a follow on to actually many of the things that we've been asking you. I guess, I know that, of course, Paradise Valley is a little bit smaller, and, of course, you've done... Your work speaks for itself there at Nevada State High School. What do you think is your ability to scale up the things that you've done previously if you get picked to be our superintendent?

Jesse Welsh:

Yeah, absolutely. Thank you, Trustee Barron. Yeah, Paradise, I mean, nothing is as large as the Clark County School District. Very few, right? I mean, we're one of the largest districts in the country, and even Paradise Valley being probably number six in the state of Arizona in terms of size is still dwarfed by CCSD with 30,000 students. It's one-tenth of the size. But it does still, I think, speak to that idea of thinking in terms of scale, you have to think in terms of systems and processes. And I think that's the key piece is making sure that the things that you're putting in place can be done at scale.

And again, I'll give that example of when we rolled out Google. We didn't start out with every single school in the district. We started small with a pilot. We started with 42 schools and we said, "Let's make sure we work out all the bugs, if there are any, and make sure it's working for those before we start rolling out to more schools, and then more schools." And then, eventually it was 250 schools, and then the entire district.

So, using those opportunities to learn on a small scale within an organization, and then take it to scale when it's ready to do that. I think that's certainly one way to be successful in that type of setting. But you've got to, in something the size of Clark County, always be thinking about what that's going to look like across the organization and taking into account the unique characteristics of all of our schools, making sure that it's going to work not just for our schools here in the valley, but also within our rural schools, what that's going to look like.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. That ends our time. I just want to say thank you to Mr. Welsh for his presentation and interview questions. We are going to take a seven-minute break, and then we will transition and go into the next agenda item, which will be 2.03, 2.02 is not an action item, so we are not taking public comment, but we will certainly do so moving forward. So, thank you.

Recess: 8:04 p.m.

Reconvene: 8:17 p.m.

2.03 Superintendent Search.

Discussion with Hazard, Young , Attea & Associates, on the debrief of the second round of candidate interviews. [Contact Person: Irene Bustamante Adams] (Reference material may be provided.) (*According to Governance Policy GP-3: Board Responsibilities*)

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

This one is not an action item. It is specifically for the second round of candidate interviews, debrief. And so, Dr. Perez.

Nanci Perez:

Thank you very much, Nanci Perez for the record. So, this is just an opportunity to ask the trustees if they have any questions about the process. Up to this time, this is not the time that we'll be discussing or deliberating any of the candidates that will take place on March 13th. But I wanted to make sure that you had the opportunity to ask any procedural questions.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Trustee Cavazos.

Trustee Cavazos:

Hold on. Thank you, Madam President. Dr. Perez, we just got this tonight, the feedback from the constituents. So, I had a question on, I just had a chance to kind of just look over it very quickly as I'm sure my colleagues did. Exactly, how was this put together? We're not getting numbers, so we're just getting percentages. And was this basically done just by HYA?

Nanci Perez:

Yeah, so the appendix part of it is all the data. There is no additional data. If you remember, the trustees decided that the feedback form would be on each of the five characteristics in the leadership profile and on a four-point Likert scale. So, the only data that is presented, which is on the pages where there are three bar charts on each page, that's all the data that exists. There isn't anything more than that because basically there's an N and the percentage of that N next to each of those bar charts.

Trustee Cavazos:

Okay, thank you. And so, the numbers that are listed here are basically the numbers of the attendees in each group. Or is it just...

Nanci Perez:

The number of respondents.

Trustee Cavazos:

The number of respondents.

Nanci Perez:

Yes.

Trustee Cavazos:

Okay.

Nanci Perez:

The number of respondents. And then, right after the number of respondents is the number or the percentages that rated three or four. And then, there's all the data, which is 1, 2, 3, or 4. And you'll see it's an N by the bar charts. And then, next to it is the percentage. So, I didn't want to editorialize in any way, shape, or form. I just wanted to put the information out there.

Trustee Cavazos:

Thank you. I want to defer to my colleagues. I might have a follow-up.

Nanci Perez:

Sure.

Trustee Cavazos:

I'm just looking at it very quickly.

Nanci Perez:

Absolutely.

Trustee Cavazos:

Thank you so much.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Yes, thank you. Trustee Dominguez.

Trustee Dominguez:

Thank you. For Dr. Perez, so can you go over the layout, what's going to happen on Thursday? And then, briefly go over, I know my previous trustees here, like trustees that have been here

Trustee Dominguez:

before, they know the process of what happens after we hire the superintendent. If you could go over that process as well.

Nanci Perez:

Sure. So, on Thursday there will be an item, and I don't know Jon if you want to weigh in at all on this. But just like all other items that come before the trustees that you may take action on, there is obviously motions and discussions and open comment, and then a vote. After you have selected a superintendent, we will provide you a document that will be like... And so, now what? All the things that are best practice that you should do when you're transitioning to a new leader.

And so, we will provide you that. If you want us to help with any of that, we certainly can. If you want to do it on your own, certainly can. If you don't do it, that's your prerogative as well. But we really highly recommend working through the transition plan and really committing to it.

Trustee Dominguez:

Thank you. And then, I guess just a more in-depth question on Thursday. So, is it by motion or are we taking each candidate one by one the way we did previously for the interviews? Or is someone motioning to essentially nominate someone for superintendent?

Nanci Perez:

Right, right. So, in essence, when you nominate someone or make a motion for someone, as soon as that passes, right? If the motion is that we appoint the next superintendent. And so, I don't know that there would... The only way you could do all three of them is if you knew that some of them weren't going to pass, which is not the case, right?

So, I think it really is a motion. And then, if it passes, you're done. And if it doesn't, you move on and hope for another motion, and you keep working on that until you get a majority of the board. Now, I will just remind the board that that's why the discussion is important, and it's really, really important that you really seek to find consensus and not champion a candidate, because the best thing you can do for your community is come to consensus and as a board, select the next superintendent.

It's never good to start with a split decision or a split vote. It happens. But I think if we all remember some of the things that we've talked about in the training, which is asking ourselves which leaders are the best connected to the leadership profile, where is this board most likely to come to consensus on a candidate rather than, this is my person. I think you'll have a better likelihood of doing that. But again, that happens throughout the discussion that you'll have on Thursday.

Trustee Dominguez:

Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

Hi, Dr. Perez. Thank you. I do see the end counts, and I do notice there's variables between some of them. Would that indicate that at the community meeting, maybe some people shifted to different rooms? Maybe people didn't stay.

Nanci Perez:

Or they just didn't do the finish, didn't do the form. And don't forget that the community room, the QR code was also on PBS.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

Okay.

Nanci Perez:

So, if they watched it, they could have done that as well. So, yeah, and even some may have done one question and not all of them, and then it would be counted. So, it could be a number of different things.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

I just wanted my colleagues and also the public to understand because I did watch online and that was available as well. So, that counts in people that were there in person and people that were participating online.

Nanci Perez:

Yes.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

I want to shift to document O...

Nanci Perez:

Okay.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

... because that happened today, I believe, this document, as far as the meeting that happened with some business.

Nanci Perez:

No, that was yesterday.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

Oh, yesterday.

Nanci Perez:

Yes.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

Okay. Thank you. I'm a little brain foggy from my illness.

Nanci Perez:

That's okay.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

So, can you talk to me about how many were there total, and then what was the process of that? Because we just received the outcomes today.

Nanci Perez:

I think there was about 15 people there, if I'm not mistaken. We were there to basically help with the candidates, bringing them in and out of the room. They each had a slot in which they came into the room, and were asked questions by all of the participants. At the end of that, they then had a discussion. The chair was leading that meeting, asked for opinions. They talked about the candidates, what they thought would be best, what they didn't. They chose to kind of do a show of hands as to who they thought would be best, second, third.

Again, we didn't really participate in that. It wasn't our meeting. And then, they just collectively decided that they wanted to give something so that they had their feedback, because I think a lot of these forums were, "Okay, so now what? We gave our time. We listened to the candidates, so now what? How do we get our feedback to the trustees?"

And we knew what that answer was for the forums last night with the forum that we referred to with the Likert scales and the leadership profile with these other group meetings like the Chamber and the LGVA. And even these groups tonight, I don't know how they're going to give you feedback. They may choose to do something like that. They may choose to do nothing. With the legislators today, I guess that would be more individual. I don't see them collectively doing that because they were kind of coming in and out of a room. So, I don't know how they're going to choose to give feedback, whether it's going to be a memo like that or nothing at all.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

So, the reason I ask is because I was given some follow-up questions about the process that happened and the understanding that I was informed by, because someone was in that space, that it was a panel. They were all in the same room, and they were questioned at the same time.

Nanci Perez:

That was today.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

So, that was-

... room and they were questioned at the same time.

Nanci Perez:

That was today.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

That was today. Okay.

Nanci Perez:

So what happened today was they were supposed to be one at a time, and then the legislators couldn't all be there at the same time. And so we quickly just changed course and put all three candidates kind of like on a panel, so that no matter when legislators were coming and going, they could ask questions of any of the candidates. Otherwise, the first one maybe would've gotten one legislator and not another legislator. It would've just kind of been disjointed. So that decision was made on the fly this morning, and so it started at about 9:30 rather than when it was supposed to start at 9:00 and we just made an adjustment on the fly.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

Thank you for the clarity because that explains and they are in session, they're very busy people.

Nanci Perez:

Yes.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

But I do appreciate you telling me this was a total of 15 people that participated. This was not a report you generated. This was them giving the memo so that we would have feedback. And I just want to follow up to anyone listening or anyone in the room, we do read our emails, so we do want the feedback and I think they're going to hate me for this, but we do want the feedback and the emails are the best way for us to capture what people are feeling and seeing. So thank you for that opening of the door to say that's exactly an avenue for us to communicate to constituents. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. And just for the record, the meeting today, Dr. Perez was local electives, not the legislators who are in Carson City.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

Yes.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Okay. Just wanted to make sure. Trustee Cavazos.

Trustee Cavazos:

Thank you, Madam President. I just wanted to clarify. I'm sorry, Dr. Perez, I was taking some notes and I know that Ramona had asked about the way that the votes were done, so there wasn't any way that we're using a different device that they can vote more than once in the same category?

Nanci Perez:

You mean the online forms?

Trustee Cavazos:

Yeah. On the online forms?

Nanci Perez:

Oh, yeah. It was open. They could do whatever they want. Yes, it was open. I mean, you have to remember that in surveys, first of all, to generate a survey, there's different decisions that you have to make. So if you want to close that, then you either have to have a list of emails that you email out to people that they only have then one link or they have to get a token, which means then they have to go back to retrieve the token and it's just a barrier. And so this is meant to give feedback. If someone nefariously went in and did this several times, yes, now they did have to put their email in so they could have, so there are different emails, right? So there isn't the same email over and over again. But yes, of course.

Again, it is meant to be a tool to be a feedback. That's why we advised against having a question like, who you want? This is not supposed to be a tally of anything. It's supposed to really represent how well the community thinks these candidates are matched to the leadership profile. And I think in all cases what you really do see is, they think the candidates are a match to the leadership profile in different degrees, in different ways, and maybe not for all five of the items, but for three or two, depending on where their strengths are. So I think it's just information to utilize and absolutely these are not scientifically created, valid and reliable survey data.

Trustee Cavazos:

Thank you very much. I see a couple of my other colleagues in the queue that I think are going to probably be asking some of the same questions I was going to ask, so I'm going to defer to them. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Zamora.

Trustee Zamora:

Thank you, Madam President. Was there any question on this feedback form, kind of asking the person filling out the form, what group they were in, so if they were parent or student, or if they were the community part or if there were staff?

Nanci Perez:

No, it was one feedback form.

Trustee Zamora:

All the same. Okay. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Trustee Dominguez.

Trustee Dominguez:

Thank you. My question was more for... Hold on here. I was getting confused. So for this, for additional reference O, are we going to have a similar or a similar letter for the unions and the other groups here?

Nanci Perez:

We did not tell them to write a letter. We did not tell them how to respond. They asked how they could respond. I said, anything that you do give will end up as public record. So I don't know how these other groups will decide to give you feedback or not. I don't know that. We did not create a specific process for them to give feedback. It was meant to be a meet-and-greet. So when we talked about this as a group and we came up with the questions on the feedback form for the community forms last night, we did not discuss how these other groups would give feedback. I think for the most part we were thinking of it more as a meet-and-greet and they are looking at it as, well, how do I get my feedback to the trustees after I spent my time here talking to these individuals? And so I don't know that they will and I don't know how they will.

Trustee Dominguez:

Yeah. I guess it is just all in fairness, because we have had a lot of emails coming through from all these different groups that haven't had it on public record or it hasn't made it to our agenda. So I'm just trying to make sure that we are creating neutrality and fairness with all of the other groups.

Nanci Perez:

Yeah. I have to defer to counsel on that. We did talk about that. I think, Jon, you've talked or have an opinion on all those emails that are coming in. That's not our purview. We don't really weigh in on your forum and the legalities of how the operations happen in terms of what's open and closed session. So I would have to defer to counsel on that question as to why the emails are not being made part of the public record.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Go ahead, Jon.

Jon Okazaki:

Thank you. Jon Okazaki, general counsel for the record. I believe that the emails that you're referring to are coming into our normal trustee communication methods. We did not. It's not me. There was no decision to take any of the emails that individual trustees get through those venues or methods to the board as part of this process. The reason why this response in particular was absolutely public was because it was part of the whole process that was advertised to the public as part of the superintendent search process. So anything that we get through any of these scheduled meetings or meet-and-greets that you have approved, any feedback you get from those meetings would definitely be presented to you and made a public record. But the emails, you know that you all get individual emails of all sorts. There was no decision to take any of that and put it into the public record.

Trustee Dominguez:

Thank you. I just want to make sure that we create fairness for all of the other groups that keep, we've obviously had this added to our agenda. We should be doing that with all the other groups that we're inviting into this process.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. And I can do that. I can reach out through work with our board liaison and let the unions that met tonight that they can submit a letter like the LBGEA did. They took it upon themselves to submit a letter. We didn't tell them to. That's how they decided to let us know their feedback. But we can be intentional and let the unions know that they can also follow the same process if they wish to or they can come in public comment as well. But we can definitely be intentional. So Trustee Stevens.

Trustee Stevens:

So I actually have a real problem with this. I'm really not happy about this at all. The whole process, I'm trying to understand how the decisions were made that we say these groups will get to be part of this process and then if they submit a letter, we're going to make it reference material and then we're going to choose these groups over here. And by the way, my understanding was that the unions that were going to be in the meetings tonight, that they were going to be connected to CCSD, but then other unions were added in and it got confusing. So now all of a sudden we have all these different groups that we're just throwing in there and I don't know who's making these decisions. And then they all have their opinions based on one interview and then it suddenly becomes Bible, like it's reference material.

I find that to be very, for me, it's very frustrating because to Trustee Dominguez's point, I don't see how this is any different than folks who are coming up for public comment and then they can make it public. But for the folks that are sending us emails and they're sending us reference letters and they're actually doing research, a lot of them, but that's not reference material. I want to understand

Trustee Stevens:

why we are choosing certain groups and their opinions based on one interview as reference material, so that the public or the trustees can go, oh, okay. It's not sitting well with me for this process. I am not a fan of the process.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Please hold your applause. This is our business meeting. Thank you so much. Thank you for that comment, Trustee Stevens. Before I go on, I just want to, for us that have been here, and especially last quarter when we were developing these ideas, the comment was that a lot of people felt left out of the process. And so the newly elected trustees, you guys were not able to hear that. But when we were developing suggestions, if you go back and look at the documents, these were in groups that were suggested to be involved in the process. And so not everybody took us up on that, but the ones that did, participated. And so from the responses that I have gotten in general from the public, they have appreciated how engaging we have been as a team with stakeholders that have been previously left out of the process. So you guys weren't previewed to that. So I don't-

Trustee Stevens:

I understand that.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

... expect you to know that. But I would also say you also made a comment about the unions. We invited the five bargaining units. And so I want to say to CCA and also to [inaudible 03:35:49], I invited the Southern Nevada Building Trades because of the 6 million plus construction projects that we work on as a team. And so I will take ownership of that because I did make that invitation to them. And so I did not give them time to ask a question, but once I owned it, I did hear that it went very well in that group. And so for other reference material as a team, we have gotten letters from other groups that we have included as part of our documentation. So anyway, I just want to share that the feedback that I am getting from the community is that they feel engaged, they feel included, and they're grateful that they got to do the meet-and-greets for the candidates. We did not give instructions on how they were supposed to give us feedback. They took it upon themselves to do that in that manner.

Trustee Stevens:

I understand that. And I do hear you in terms of, because I love the business community, I love our unions, all of our unions. I get all of that. My concern is that it does feel like if you're, again, to her point, if you're going to do it for one, then now we have to do it for all. We're kind of setting a precedent by making it reference material. And that's my concern. If we're going to invite these groups in so that the business community can be heard, there are other folks in the business community that also might want to be heard. So again, it comes down to the process. So I don't feel like this has been a smooth process where if we are trying to create inclusion, then we have to include everyone. And I don't know that this process has really given us the time to do that.

Trustee Stevens:

It has felt a little rushed, so I mean, granted. We were given the invitation for these meetings on Friday and they happened Monday and Tuesday. So again, with the rushingness of it, I just feel like it's not, I hear what you're saying. I don't want to discount what you're saying, and I do want our community to feel part of this and feel included, but this process has not been as smooth as I think it could have been. And I will tell you that I don't understand in this process why one particular group would get to have it as a reference material and others would not.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Cavazos.

Trustee Cavazos:

I think that Trustee Stevens has basically what I'm getting from the community that we're supposed to be listening to is simply that the point is that she's not disputing that they should not be a part of it. But just simply, as somebody said earlier today, who is the district? The district is the superintendent. Superintendent also works with the board of trustees. But when it comes down to our policies, I also have a problem with this. And the President did speak with me earlier when I expressed an issue with it. And I think what we are just trying to say here is it comes to us as far as to be equitable. So to me, this should have been probably public comment.

The business community is a very smart business community, global alliance, workforce connections, all of them, they know how to submit public comment. They know how to submit input. So this was our decision or somebody's decision to make this as reference material tonight instead of a regular public comment. So I don't think it's like we didn't give them this instruction or we gave them that instruction. It's that we, somebody here, we decided that this would be appropriate. And I think that people are saying that we don't see that as being equitable. Not that they don't have the right to do this and not to be included, but just simply the protocol and how we did it, it's not sitting well. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

And I will also take ownership for that because I know that I was asked, we have three items that we have the community forum, we have the business community that had their meeting on Monday and we had another item, and do you want it to make it public information? And my answer was yes, that yes, make it public information, not only for us, but make it open so that all the public could see it. Now, for the individuals that had their meet-and-greet today, then like I said, we can be intentional and go back and say, you can submit a letter of this if you'd like or submit it to us individually, but I will own that as well. I was asked that we had this information, do you want to make it public information? My answer was yes. So I will own that. Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

So it's the reason I said what is the feedback loop for people to interact after they've done these in meet-and-greet. And my expectation was that they would be directly interfacing by emailing us. So I have a question for our Counsel, Mr. Okazaki, because there is issue with the way that this is

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

language. I think that's the issue too, because the process was that when they chose to give us the document, it does show that they did some of their own ranking and they did some evaluation of candidates, and it's very specific. So is there a possibility help school us as trustees, can we take this off as a reference document and put it in as public comment instead?

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

That's a idea.

Jon Okazaki:

Jon Okazaki, general counsel for the record, as long as it's in front of the board and as long as it's public in the sense that you've been presented with it and obviously you have it to consider and making your decisions, I don't think it matters whether it's as a reference item on this particular agenda item or received into the record as public comment.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

Let me rephrase my question. Can we reverse our decision after this discussion that we would like to put it in as public comment and not a reference document? Because of the lack of access for everybody else, and I would say deferring to President Bustamante Adams, I would prefer not to have other groups send us things unless it's going to be directly to our emails.

Jon Okazaki:

So you're saying that after you approve the agenda, including the reference material for this item or last item, you want to change that and pull this reference item?

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

That is correct.

Jon Okazaki:

So on the fly, I'm going to say if you want to do a motion for that, and then it'd be approved by motion, you could pull this as reference material. I will tell you that there's no way to pull it from the public realm. It is where, I mean, its already been, it's the same thing when we amend our agendas. The first draft is out there. But yes, I think it's within your rights to take action on your agenda. And if you make a motion, this is part of the process. So I think you could make a motion and if it passes, you could remove it from the reference materials.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Zamora.

Trustee Zamora:

Thank you, Madam President. Thank you for taking responsibility for this. It is actually really upsetting this whole conversation. I'm going to try to be as professional as I can. If we do the individual, I like the idea, Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan. And my thoughts was before you made that. I do appreciate it. I was a little blindsided to hear that you invited other unions that were not part of the CCSD. Was there any others that, besides the one you mentioned?

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

No.

Trustee Zamora:

When was that decision made?

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

I think in, I don't know, whenever we were having the conversations about inviting unions.

Trustee Zamora:

Okay. I think this is a great learning opportunity more than anything of just communicating with team members, whoever you decide who those team members are, to at least hear different points of views. So it's not you just making the sole decision, because I do find that a little bit unfair for other unions that might be as good as Southern Nevada Building Trades Union, right? But if we had collectively said that these strict five unions, I think we should have stuck to that. But it's a learning lesson. I will actually wait to see if there's a motion, Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan, and would love to second that motion if possible.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you.

Jon Okazaki:

I need to come back in here. I always like to let you guys do what you want to do, try to get to have you accomplish the goals that you want to accomplish. And I want to make you do it legally. So this is not an action item. So I'm having a concern sitting here trying to think of how I can let you take action on something that's not part of the agenda item. I think the only remedy would be at the next board meeting that will incorporate some type of action item that would allow you to modify the reference materials that you have received in regard to the process of your superintendent selection. So I think if you make a motion and it passes, you could modify the reference materials to take it out of a classification as a reference material and classify it as something else. But unfortunately, I don't see how you can do that tonight, because we don't have an action item before you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you so much. Thank you so much. Trustee Henry.

Trustee Henry:

Thank you. And I don't want to be repetitive. It is a learning lesson. There are several organizations and groups who reached out to many of us who wanted to be part of having conversations with the candidates. And I didn't forward those because I thought that we all had a consensus that we would have the public forum on yesterday, and I had told them to go there. Go there, a lot of resources and time and energy was placed on that meeting at Rancho to ensure that everyone had the opportunity to ask their questions. And so I do want to send apologies out to a lot of the organizations who reached out specifically the Divine Nine organizations, because I feel like we lost a large part of our community, who didn't get the opportunities that the unions did. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

So counsel... Oh, yay. Sorry. Okay. Can I do a motion to agendize to disregard it as a reference material and move it to public comment?

Jon Okazaki:

For the next board meeting?

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

For right now.

Jon Okazaki:

No, you can't create an agendized item for tonight's meeting.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you, Trustee-

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

It cannot be rescinded?

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Just remind the public that this is our business meeting. So please refrain from your comments.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

I just asked you.

Jon Okazaki:

No. So the only way to go back and change something that you've already done is to re-agendize it, and take action at that time. So whichever process, there may be a couple of ways that I can suggest. You get this item on the agenda for an action item. There may be a couple of ways to do it. It would have to be on your next board meeting.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

Which is too late. Yeah.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Okay. Thank you. Trustee Cavazos.

Trustee Cavazos:

I think that I would agree with that. Counsel has just recommended I think that I believe that we cannot go back and basically undo what we've already done. I also agree with my colleagues that this has been a learning opportunity. And we're not trying to bash anyone, but to my colleague, Trustee Henry, I also received several requests and I basically referred them the same way that she did. And now I'm getting messages saying, "Well, you kind of excluded us." You said that you voted on this and these unions, et cetera, et cetera. And the other point I think we're trying to make is that it is a learning opportunity, and that if we do get this request again, that we follow protocol. And yes, we can still put it out in public, but it can be in public comment. And that way it's equitable for everyone else because the way that this looks right now, it does not look equitable. So that's the only point I would make. And I would be in favor of putting this on the agenda for March 27th, I believe. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Dominguez.

Trustee Dominguez:

Thank you. This is a question for the Attorney Jon Okazaki. From my understanding, we can go back between the agenda at the pleasure of the board. Could we go back to 1.02?

Jon Okazaki:

Once you've taken action on a motion, there are processes for going back and rescinding it, but it's not at the same night just putting it back on the agenda, going back in time and doing it again.

Unknown Speaker:

He's correct.

Trustee Dominguez:

I guess. Okay. It have to be at a regular board meeting.

Jon Okazaki:

It has to be properly agendized.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Trustee Barron.

Trustee Barron:

No. This is an unusual situation, which in over 10 years of sitting on different boards, I've never been in this kind of a position before. I remember reading somewhere that if we took action before we left the dais, that you actually could go back and change something. I'm trying to look it up here right now on NRS and prohibition on taking corrective action after a certain time. 386.330, but of course, let's see here. It is applicable here, section 6. Well, apparently not. It says here, schedule the delayed agenda item at a future meeting by placing the item on its agenda for future meeting pursuant to chapter 241, or wait until 24 hours after the originally scheduled time of the meeting, but not later than three business days. And I don't think this qualifies as an emergency.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Help me, Trustee Barron.

Trustee Barron:

Yeah. It's again, it's to reconsider not rescind. I suppose, I mean, counselor, couldn't we actually, instead of rescind, couldn't we actually label us as a reconsideration? And if that's the case, we could reconsider it and then we could reconsider the inclusion of this item. I myself, I looked at it. I know when I made the motion here to, of course, approve the agenda, I had them with all the way down where it said additional reference O, and although since this is the first time I'd seen it, I didn't know it was going to cause this kind of a fury. Had I known that, of course, going back in time, but-

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Exactly. I think that's my point. Exactly right. Because did I have time to read the entire, we received information, a part of the superintendent's search, I'm in the same boat as you are, what you just said. Do we want to make stuff public? And so my answer was, yes, please. What we get the public should get.

Trustee Barron:

Yeah. No, I totally understand what you're saying, Madam President. I think though, in this case, in the spirit of trying to keep everything fair for everyone, perhaps a reconsideration would be an order. Again, not rescind it, but reconsider the acceptance of Addendum item O. Oh, not oh. I

Trustee Barron:

guess it's not a number, just Addendum item O. That as a matter of fact, if possible, I guess we're not in action right now, but if I was to be able to make a motion, I know that's what I'd like to do is to make a reconsideration of my motion to accept the agenda. And I would want it to be reconsidered to accept it with the exclusion of item O.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Legal counsel.

Jon Okazaki:

Maybe the best... I'm sorry. Maybe the best thing to do is take a short break. I'll confirm my understanding. I'll look for any type of exception that may be applicable, if the desire of the board is to reconsider this, but I don't want to make a... I would appreciate the time to look into it.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Okay. Thank you. We're going to go ahead and take a short recess. The time now is 8:58.

Recess: 8:58 p.m.

Reconvene: 9:10 p.m.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

We're going to go ahead and come back, and our legal counsel does have input. If I could have our members in the audience to respect our legal counsel as he gives his opinion.

Jon Okazaki:

Thank you, Madam President. Jon Okazaki, General Counsel for the record. So my review and interpretation of relevant law, I'm going to say that I couldn't find anything that expressly prohibits you from reconsidering that agenda item. So, what I would recommend is you finish this item because it's not an action item. The President can reopen whatever agenda item the approval of the agenda is. So, you open it, and you see if there's any motions. Then if there's a motion and a second, discussion and vote.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Okay. Thank you. Dr. Perez, do want to add anything to-

Nanci Perez:

Excuse me. Nancy Perez for the record. Just that is there any direction regarding the other groups that have met, the local legislators and the unions and the admin about how to respond? Because when we did meet with the chambers, we said we can do whatever you want. We could have been more prescriptive and said email or come to public comment because we really didn't have that

Nanci Perez:

kind of direction. So, is there something that you would like to be given, direction to the group this morning, as well as the other two groups tonight?

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. I'm going to ask Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan again to repeat your comments from that question.

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

So, I think for full transparency and to provide equity for all groups, that there were two avenues, which is always our practice, meaning that they would either come to public comment and provide that, and put it on record. The second option is to email us directly, and there's also a space on our website. They can go to Let's Talk where they can submit that. I think Mr. Caruso would like to also weigh in as well.

Joe Caruso:

Madam President, Members of the Board. Joe Caruso for the record. So, a teachable moment for sure, so two buckets. There's the constituent bucket, which is contact your board member, which then I create a case. Send you the case through Let's Talk. Then if you hold up your agenda on Page 2, there's board meeting comments. So, if you want the public to submit the comments to board meeting comments, which then gets uploaded to BoardDocs, I would recommend go to the board meeting comments because we've legally noticed the public that whatever they submit to the board meeting comments would be included in board meeting comments.

Versus bucket A, which is the constituent concern. "My son is having a problem at blah, blah, blah." They may not want that in. If we assume that they're submitting it for a constituent's concern, we address it through the constituent process. We don't go back to them and say, "Well, did you mean to submit it to board meeting comments?" Because think about the timeframe that it would take if we did that for every single email. That's why we have this separate account, Board Meeting Comments. It goes directly to this group. The board office then looks at it. They redact the email contact information, anything that's personally identifiable, student ID number, phone number. Then it gets uploaded into BoardDocs.

So again, if the community wants to make comments to have it included in the agenda, I would highly recommend. It's right here. Board Meeting Comments, top of Page 2, and that way there it would be included. There is a timeframe for it. It says right on the bottom of Page 1. It says, "A public comment period will be offered. Each individual wishing to speak will be given three minutes to address the board. Written public comments may be submitted to boardmeetingcomments@nv.ccsd.net after the agenda has been posted and at least eight business hours prior to the scheduled start of the meeting. Any written comments received after that deadline and prior to the meeting adjourning will be uploaded to BoardDocs within the appropriate item on the next business day."

Joe Caruso:

So, then in perpetuity, it's always included with BoardDocs for that agenda. Again, that would be my recommendation. If that's the pleasure of the board, just for full transparency, and hopefully that clarified it.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you, Mr. Caruso. So, what I'm understanding from the team, so please, is that we would re-look at agenda item 1.02, but in addition for other entities that met today, if you are interested in providing comments for the trustees, then you would go to boardmanagementcomment@nv.ccsd.net to submit. I'm getting a nod from our board liaison. That's how we want it done.

Joe Caruso:

Again, Madam President, if the request is for it to be transparent so everyone can see it, that would be the most transparent way to go because I know with the agenda that's already posted, people can now submit to that board meeting comments, and we can include it. If it's something that it's a constituent concern, and you want just to come to you, then we have that process through Contact Your Trustee or submit through Let's Talk.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. So Dr. Perez, does that answer your question that you had?

Nanci Perez:

Yes, and I'll work through the staff to make sure that the people that were at these meetings get that message.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Okay, thank you very much. Oh.

Trustee Zamora:

[inaudible 04:13:52] had a question.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Yes, Trustee Zamora.

Trustee Zamora:

Thank you, Madam President. So, for folks who are listening, right, and we want it to be public, they will tie it to the agenda item so it directly connects to that. Correct, Joe? Yes. So, folks know, and it doesn't. I don't want it to fall into a public comment, just the basic at the end. I want it to be tied to the agenda item, so that it's important to note for the folks who are submitting that it will be

Trustee Zamora:

... tied to the agenda item of that specific topic, which I should know off the top of my head for Thursday.

Joe Caruso:

So Trustee Zamora, beautifully said. For example, so on the Thursday agenda, that would be a conversation that say for example, I'm going to submit board meeting comments. I'm going to submit the subject line will be Agenda item, Superintendent search. Then once the board office gets that, then they can go ahead, and they can start processing it. Then if you look at previous agendas that are in BoardDocs, you'll see where it's attached. If it's not attached to an item, and it's general public comment like you said, then it would go towards the end of the agenda and not be paired with anything.

Trustee Zamora:

Thank you for clarifying that because I just wanted folks to know that specific step. The other thing is that if you don't want it in public, you can also individually message your trustees because that individual email will bypass ... I don't want to use that word, but that's the only word that I can think of ... the Let's Talk process, which becomes multiple steps. But folks are able to directly email trustees, so we can have that information by Thursday? Yes. Thank you.

Nanci Perez:

He's nodding yes.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Yes. Our board liaison is nodding yes on the comments that Trustee Zamora just said. So, I'm going to turn it back to Trustee Barron. You said you wanted to make a motion?

Trustee Barron:

No, no.

Trustee Zamora:

We have to close this other item.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Oh, we have to close it first.

Jon Okazaki:

We're going to close this item, and then you're going to reopen the item where. I'm sorry, what's the numbers?

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

1.02.

Jon Okazaki:

1.02.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

So, we're going to go ahead. Is there any other questions for Dr. Perez? Yes, Trustee Cavazos.

Trustee Cavazos:

Yes. I don't know if Dr. Perez would know this, or it would be the Board President, but can we as a follow-up? It doesn't have to be right now. Can we find out what other union groups were in that meeting, as a follow-up?

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Yes, we could. So, it was the five bargaining units and the Southern Nevada Building Trade Union leaders that represented the other 19.

Trustee Cavazos:

Okay, so that was designated at the meeting. Everybody knew like who was there?

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

They started out with introductions, from what I understand. I wasn't in there, so I'm not exactly sure. Dr. Perez?

Nanci Perez:

I wasn't in there either. I was in here. Does anybody?

Trustee Cavazos:

We can do that as a follow-up, Madam President. Okay, thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Any other questions for Dr. Perez? I do have a question. So, on Thursday as a team had decided to have the HYA staff help us through this process with the community meetings. My question is on Thursday, you will be participating by phone to help us with any questions that we may have about processes that we can't think of now.

Nanci Perez:

Yeah. I think there would just be questions because on Thursday it's mostly your decision, discussion and action, but I'll certainly be on, available. If you have any questions, absolutely, I'll be available.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you so much. All right. Seeing no other questions, then we'll close item 2.03

1.02 Adoption of the Agenda

Motion reopen item 1.02, and reconsideration to remove reference material 2.02(O)

Motion: Barron Second: Zamora Vote: Unanimous

Motion passed.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Legal counsel, before we go to 3.0 and 4.01, can we reopen 1.02?

Jon Okazaki:

Yes.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Okay, so now I'm going to reopen 1.02, and I'll turn it over to Trustee Barron. Did you want to make the motion?

Trustee Barron:

Yes, Madam President. I'd like to make a motion to adopt the agenda with the reconsideration of the additional reference material, which is removing 2.02 O.

Nanci Perez:

As reference material.

Trustee Barron:

As reference material, of course.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. I believe I had a second from Trustee Zamora that you wanted to?

Trustee Zamora:

I don't want to take it because I see folks in the queue, so I would give it to you. You're fine? Okay, I'll second the motion.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Okay. I have a first from Trustee Barron, a second from Trustee Zamora. It's reconsideration for item to be removed, and it's item 2.02 O. Oh, thank you.

Jon Okazaki:

We're back on an action item. So, the sequence is discussion. You already made the motion. That's okay. But if you have any discussion, then public comment, then vote.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Right. Thank you for that reminder, but is there any discussion on the motion?

Trustee Zamora:

Oh, not on the motion, but I think we have 102. Is it 102?

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

All right, we have Ms. Anna Binder.

Trustee Zamora:

Lydia is on the queue.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Oh, you're in the queue. Thank you. Trustee Dominguez.

Trustee Dominguez:

Thank you. Sorry. I just wanted to make sure because I heard you said 2.02. The reference material is 2.02 O, but the agenda item is 1.02, so I just wanted to make sure we were all on the same page.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Yes, that is correct.

Trustee Dominguez:

Perfect.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Any other? Okay, we'll turn it over to Ms. Binder.

Public Hearing

Anna Binder:

Thank you. Thank you, Madam President, Members of the Board, Mr. Okazaki. I really appreciate the step-back on this because we've spent years just getting stuff forced down our throats, and then we're crying about it on social media for days and weeks. So, I do really appreciate the willingness to step back. So last year I believe in reference material 2.02, around Page 21-ish, there's a starting point where the previous board voted to have certain focus groups. So, as you're contemplating removing this as a referenced material, it is from one of those focus groups.

Another one of those focus groups did submit a letter as well, but that was last week put as just written public comment. So, in delineation, I would think it would be fair that if properly submitted by the identified focus groups, it should be additional reference material. Then if it's not, then that is public comment, but we spent a lot of time identifying and including those particular groups, so that could be an easy adjustment. So, potentially leaving this as reference material, but going back and capturing the other focus groups and bringing that forward Thursday or even today to be included as additional reference materials from focus groups. That I think would be fair because we did identify them very separately from the rest of the community. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Next is Jenna.

Jenna Robertson:

Jenna Robertson. For the record, I just want to reiterate what Ms. Binder said, and thank you guys for reconsidering this. I think it is huge because one, it shows that you're willing to adapt. I certainly appreciate that you're willing to hear that there was a little commotion in the audience, that this was a big issue. I am hoping that it's reference material, and forgive me if I overlooked it, about who these group participants were, what groups were invited. Perhaps even what criteria was used to determine that they should be invited because historically, you're not wrong.

As a board, groups are left out. Groups want to participate that don't always get to participate, but historically groups regularly get to participate that it's never really understood how they got chosen for a specific focus group, panel when other community groups have expressed interest and are not invited to the table. So, I hope that as part of public record that these groups are publicly listed, that we know how they were chosen, and maybe that could be considered going forward, too. So, thank you for listening.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Chris Giunchigliani.

Chris Giunchigliani:

Good evening, Chris Giunchigliani. Madam Chair, Trustees. This has been a wonderful discussion, one way or another. Thank you very much because you're all coalescing, and that's a really, really good piece. Whether you wind up agreeing or disagreeing, you're respectful and taking care of

Chris Giunchigliani:

that. I guess I have a couple questions. The LVGEA says there were seven. If I count the seven chambers, there were 13 people that voted, and I don't know. I don't know who was in attendance. I don't know was workforce connections there or advising or in any way? We don't know who the actual members of it were.

The issue is it makes it look, smack of favoritism, which you all caught onto. I went back to all the previous meetings, and every other focus group was listed as written comment on the bottom of the page. None of them were entered in as reference. So, I don't know what your procedure is as to who made that determination to make them a reference rather than written comments, which was the past practice. So, that's just something to flush out and correct for going forward. I do want to say that it should be public comment, so that you're treating everybody the same. I would personally think it would make sense that any previous focus group's written comments be asked to be forwarded and attached to Thursday's meeting so they don't have to rewrite in again. You have already got it part of your process, and you can just deem as a board that written comment be carried forward for the purposes of Thursday's meeting, so it's all in the same backup information. At least that would be a suggestion I would make.

Finally, I just thought it was ironic because the immediate past president of LVGEA actually wrote a letter of recommendation in support of Ms. Ebert's application. So, I thought it was kind of funny that here we're having this kind of discussion, but it's important to note people do change. That's fine, but if you don't even know who the parties were that were playing, then you don't know how skewed something can potentially be. You've been making every attempt to make this as fair and consistent across the board. So, thank you, and I hope you choose to do the other. Robert's Rules of Order. Actually, I gave you the wrong language. I gave somebody rescind. I apologize. It's reconsider. So, thank you very much for doing this, and thanks, Jenna.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Dr. Lazos?

Sylvia Lazos:

Thank you very much. My name is Sylvia Lazos, L-A-Z-O-S. There is a legal concept called relevance, and I think this is what we should be looking at when we're looking at this document. Is it really relevant to the process and to your judgment of the candidates? How can we figure out whether this is relevant? Did this go, who was in attendance? The LVGEA convened. Were there 13 people from the LVGEA and one person from the Asian Chamber? We have no idea of the composition of this group or whether it went through a formal process within each group. Did the Latin Chamber as a group agree with these comments?

So, I mean, it's a bunch of random comments by someone who took it upon themselves to write a rather coherent memo, but at the same time, was this based on just the random people that were in the room, or did you go back and you talked to your board? Did you use it based on just the brilliance of a 15-minute interview, or did you really look at what you have been looking at, is ability to lead all of the references. Was it a deep thing or just the glam of a 15-minute interview?

Sylvia Lazos:

In my opinion, this is not a very relevant document. Sure, put it into the public documents, but I'm more concerned about your thinking process or how much weight are you going to give to this? I would suggest you'll give it very little weight. Although it's been written up and it looks nice and shiny, I don't know what the hell went on in this room. Sorry for using that word, Madam. Everything's in the passive tense. Have you noticed that? Who is behind this? Who wrote this? No one signed this, and you're supposed to take it into consideration? So, my suggestion is to ignore this document because we just don't know what it's about. Thank you very much.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Ms. Williams?

Yvette Williams:

Thank you, Madam President and to the Board. I just want to say thank you to Trustee Dominguez and Trustee Stevens for beginning this conversation because I was sitting in the audience very concerned. My name is Yvette Williams, Clark County Black Caucus Chair, and we are one of the focus groups, CC Clark County School District focus groups that hosted an event on behalf of the district last year. We did that in partnership with some of the other Black organizations in the community and worked with Trustee Johnson. Thank you again for your leadership and working with us on putting this focus group together. That included NAACP, NAN Ministers Alliance, Churches of Southern Nevada, 100 Black Men, and other community organizations were invited to participate. I'm not going to speak on behalf of those organizations. They might very well send their own recommendations, but the Clark County Black Caucus did send on February 23rd our letter of endorsement for Ms. Jhone Ebert. It was listed as a public comment at last meeting. My question is instructions as to what do we do to make sure that our document is part of the official record and that the public can see our recommendations and our reasoning for endorsing Miss Ebert. So, what should we do to make sure that our document is displayed properly to the community as a focus group in our recommendation? I'm just wanting to make sure I know what's the proper protocol and what I should do to make sure our voice is heard in this discussion and the community knows where we stand. I know I'm asking a question, and I'm just making a comment.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

I know. You're asking a question.

Yvette Williams:

Well, you're my trustee. So, can my trustee please give me advice after the meeting or text me and let me know how I should proceed?

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

I will. Yes, and we'll share that with I'll have our board liaison come back up, just to repeat for the groups that are still here and the ones that are paying attention online.

Yvette Williams:

I don't feel I should have to send it again, but I want to make sure our voices are represented.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Right. Thank you. Thank you. Okay. See no other public comment on 1.02 and no other discussion. So, we have a motion and a second. Please cast your votes. Okay, that motion passes 7 to 0 for a reconsideration and removal of item 2.02 O.

Upcoming Meeting of the Board of Trustees

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

So, then we will now go to item 3.0. The next meeting of the Board of Trustees is Thursday, March 13th, 2025 at 5:00 p.m. here in this boardroom.

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

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Now we are going to public comment, and our first person is Chris Giunchigliani. No? Okay. Ms. Yvette Williams, would you like to?

Public Hearing

Yvette Williams:

Yvette Williams, Chair of the Clark County Black Caucus. Also, the Executive Director of the Black Student Union Network. I had last meeting provided all of you with a brochure for the BSU Network. My intention was to invite you all to our annual BSU conference coming up on March 28th. It's our big year-end event. We'll have about a thousand students there, and I just wanted to extend the invitation to all of you because I know many of you may not be familiar. I haven't participated in any of our events. It is very exciting. Some of you have and it's pretty exciting. And so, I just shared the brochure because I wanted to make sure you knew who we were and the work that we do in partnership with the district. So, I wanted to extend that invitation to you, if any of you're interested.

I know you can't have a quorum, but those who can participate, we certainly would love have you. And I know the kids would love to see you there. And so, let me know if you're interested. I didn't want to take up too much of your time, but it's exciting for the kids and to have you there to see. We also do a senior strut for the graduating seniors. They get their leadership medallion, and so it's a really big deal. So, thank you so much.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. And thank you for that clarity, because I also know that was a learned opportunity as well. So, Dr. Lazos?

Sylvia Lazos:

Since this is open public comment, this is Sylvia Lazos, S-Y-L-V-I-A L-A-Z-O-S, I thought I'd take the opportunity to share with you at least my reactions.

I was at the community group meeting three hours last night and sat through this. And again, my concerns about bias in the process. We have one candidate who is very good at interviewing. Very quick with his responses, very fast talker, someone who went to Harvard, magna cum laude. I can tell you, as graduating also from an elite institution, anybody with that credential is very quick of the mind.

Not necessarily what you're looking for, which is capacity. Capacity to think through deep problems, capacity to identify systems issues, capacity to really listen. So, there's a difference between my presentation being quick and engaging, and whether that misleads me to think that that person is the right leader for an institution that has the kinds of depths of problems that we have. And I would submit to you that last time around, we made the mistake of hiring the quick person, the glib person, the person with quick answers, and that we made a big mistake. So, I'm asking you to please look beyond that and look again at the experience, the evidence, the relevance of that experience that that person has to the depth of problems that we're going to be facing. It's going to be a tough decision. I appreciate that there's a lot of information being thrown at you, but try to wean out and really think about who at this time can really deal with the deep system issues that we have to deal with.

And then, finally, I would say, having been at the legislature, how important that legislative connection is. And that that legislative connection is not just done in a minute, in a quick minute. It's done over years of transactions. It's a relational relationship. And people in Carson City learn who to trust, who to listen to, and who can deliver the message and the goods. And I think that's going to be really important for us as we look at budget cuts coming down the road. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you, Dr. Lazos. Ms. Jenna Robertson? Robertson? Robertson? My apologies.

Jenna Robertson:

No, you're good. Jenna Robertson, for the record. I came with notes, but really, I'm just going to wing this here.

When it comes to our superintendent pick, I am hoping that you'll pick somebody proactive. I think that there's a history of feeling like the district is not proactive. We're reactive in a lot of ways. And every single one of the candidates, whether it was last night or tonight, had comments about how they would be proactive in our district. There was a couple of budget comments about having various plans. I think we need somebody proactive in this role.

Jenna Robertson:

I think about when COVID hit and, of course, nobody could imagine what happened. Nobody had a plan for that. However, there should have been a plan for some kind of... There could have been a pandemic where there could have been an earthquake, where kids had to learn from home for a couple weeks. What was the plan? There should have been a plan for something to happen that might keep kids out of school for a while. I don't think we could have anticipated COVID, I'm not saying that, but there should have been a plan.

So, to have the idea that somebody wants to be proactive and have three plans on the table for something, wow, that felt like a luxury. That really felt like it was refreshing to hear, that somebody wants to be proactive about something in our district. So, I really hope the district, you, as trustees, sorry, will consider... Of course, that's not the only thing, but I really hope that that's important to you, because it's important to me.

Another thing I wanted to say that came up while I was listening to the interviews tonight was the alternative route for licensure is a really great thing, that program that we have here in the district. However, I'm going to give you my experience with that. I was a vacancy sub in a really awesome classroom the first six months of this year. I loved my job, I loved my kids. I never ever wanted to be a licensed teacher. Not my jam. I'm too old, I'm too tired, didn't want to teach. Subbing was fun because it was flexible. I liked that I could still be with my kids.

But once I got into the classroom, I really loved the school. I really loved these kids. And one day, CCSD sent me a questionnaire or a survey. Was I interested in learning more about the alternative licensure? And I replied, "Yes, I would love to talk to somebody." And then, not long after that, I think there was an email. There was an email, there was a survey, and I think I talked to somebody in person that I was interested.

Not one time, not one time, three times I filled something out, not one time did anybody get back to me. And I loved my school, and I loved my kids. And for the first time ever, I was interested in finding out what it would take for me to be a licensed teacher long term. I would stay. It doesn't seem to be a priority to get licensed teachers in the classroom. Even licensed teachers can't get sublicenses right now. So, please, make it a priority. Thank you.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Jessica Alle? I hope I'm saying that right. A-L-L-E. Jessica? David...

Jenna Robertson:

That was a student.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Oh, my apologies. David Gomez. And then after that, Anna Binder.

David Gomez:

David Gomez for the record, Nevada Peace Alliance president. I want to thank the trustees that did respond to my little thing I sent to them, to give them explanations on how I felt about what was

David Gomez:

being picked for our school district. I do not agree with some of the candidates that you guys are looking at.

One is a really former paid actor, ran for Congress. He's a paid actor. This guy knows how to act, and he knows how to make things sound very well. And people were sending me messages, saying, "I feel like I want to buy a car right now, and I didn't know what they were talking about." But I was in the hallway, thinking, "Why does somebody want to buy a car at a board meeting?"

But nevertheless, the qualified people that we see, and I'm glad that Dr. Lazos did say that we made a mistake, and it was a mistake that I personally said, don't do. I said, "Do not hire this person." Nobody listened to me. The only senior person that I see up here is her, right there. She's been here a very long time, and she remembered me saying it, regardless of how she voted. It doesn't matter.

But at this point, you're looking at candidates that does not know how to navigate through our legislation. You're looking at people that don't understand. You know what? I've been picking employees for a very long time. I helped pick Dr. Smith of Rancho and all the staff and culture and climate is wonderful. I recommended John here when you guys had him up here. I recommended so many different people that have turned out to be excellent. Dr. Mike Barton, they didn't want him at West Prep. They were like, "We don't want this white guy here." So, I was like, "Well, why not?" And I kid you not, that's what they said. And I said, "Why not?" I said, "He's a great guy." And come to find out, everybody was crying when he left. Imagine that.

So, in such a diverse group of people that we have that sit up here on this board, I would think that God hasn't bestowed upon one of you, or some of you, or most of you, discernment, to be able to discern the crap when you hear it, the bull when you see it. And what I just saw a minute ago, which you guys corrected, which I do appreciate, was something that obviously seemed like nepotism behind a hidden cloak. It was unbelievable.

I'm so happy that these two trustees were pointing it out and you guys figured it out and jumped on board with it. But you got to remember, you're playing a game with our children's lives if you pick the clown. And I'm going to tell you, an actor is an actor. And as far as Dr. Welsh, he's a great guy, great personality. I like him as a person, but nevertheless, he cannot do what we need right now. And don't forget that, please.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Ms. Binder?

Anna Binder:

Thanks. Okay. Thank you, Madam President, members of the board. So, not only was one of those candidates raised as a childhood actor, that acting went well into his teens, as you can see from his resume, he's a professional lecturer, so definitely knows how to tell you exactly what you want to hear. The thing that bothers me the most about this is, again, we were here six years ago with Jara having these same interactions with the community, the same interactions with the board.

Anna Binder:

And if anyone, if you want, I'll go back and find that meeting, if you want to put it on your car while you're commuting and you want to listen to it. But it's almost like history feels like it's trying to repeat itself with the biggest mistake that the previous boards made. We barely escaped Jara. And then, to have a candidate sit here and talk about like, "We fought against the attempts of closing our elementary schools and consolidating them, and basically leasing back out our elementary schools," because that's a step that privatizers make in large communities. They want our facilities. And look, the municipalities can open their own charter schools. They need facilities. So, gee, yeah, let's close some of our public schools and siphon off our properties. Talk to Danielle about that.

What bothered me the most, though, and I believe there's three, possibly, trustees that heard this, he was a superintendent when the feds changed the rules for our J-1 teachers. And some of you will remember how hard I had to stand and fight to try to keep my son's J-1 teacher. My son had not made progress in years. And he finally made progress with that teacher, only for her to get ripped from him. And by the time anyone could make it public, we had no room to fight. And I only had one lawmaker who contacted me to help me. The district didn't help me. Only one, Julie Pazina, emailed me and said, "What can I do to help?" I was calling the feds, I was calling my congresspeople, everybody, and I couldn't keep his teacher. And then, for two years, he didn't make any progress until this long-term sub, who's also doing an ARL, who now has to do another route because she's getting paid as long-term sub instead of a primary autism teacher, even though she's doing the job. So, talk about ARLs, but he was the superintendent when that rule came down.

So, now, I'm trying to figure out, how many three and four-star schools did you have? Because if you had them, you would've known that you had to force those teachers out of the very needy schools in your district. And there was no mention of that, so my heart sank. Because if you were a superintendent facing that, you would've been able to speak to that tonight.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you so much. Next, Cara McAllen? I hope I said it right. Please correct me on the record.

Cara McAnallen:

Good evening, trustees. My name is Cara and I'm a freshman at the Las Vegas Academy of the Arts. Recently, I learned that CCSD's cabinet-level members are responsible for the budget decisions and are reducing LVA's funding from 105% to 93 in the upcoming school year simply because they see it as just a magnet school and not a CTA. This will not only affect funding for LVA, this will only affect funding for LVA and not any other school.

I'm a technical theater major, with aspirations to become a stage manager for Cirque du Soleil. LVA is truly a career in technical academy, especially in the entertainment capital of the world where we live, where local stage union workers with IATSE has over 4,000 members alone. In addition, according to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, Nevada has the fourth-largest workforce of entertainers and performers in the country. The arts is a career path in our community, and our tourist-based economy has been built around it for decades, almost a century.

Cara McAnallen:

I am here to ask the trustees to urge the new superintendent and CCSD leadership to reconsider this change before the budget is finalized. All we are asking is to be funded the same as we historically have when my mom went there back in 1993, and how all other high school programs with a full magnet program are funded. It just seems unfair to call out one school without any real discussion or input from the school community. A \$1.2 million cut threatens our programs and resources for opportunities for me, as well as my other fellow students.

For example, a few weeks ago, Warner Brothers executives came in and had a workshop, a Q&A, as well as offered us jobs and apprenticeships that would've really boosted our field to go out into the... Put a job on our resume, essentially. And this was the first year we got to do that. And if the budget cut happens, unfortunately, this might be our last. This school is very important to me and has made me feel comfortable enough to embrace myself and feel confident enough to go out into the world after I graduate. Thank you so much for your time tonight.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you, Cara, and we appreciate you staying. Anthony...

Anthony Manesa:

Manesa.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Manesa?

Anthony Manesa:

M-A-N-E-S-A.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you, Anthony.

Anthony Manesa:

I just wanted to thank you for being here today. Two people I want to commend. Very, very good. Starting with Isaac Barron. I don't know if you've been to his school, his class. I know him since 2010. He teaches these kids American history, American Native history, world history, and the kids walk out intelligent out of his class. If he can do it, you all have to make sure you get teachers with skill, not just a teacher that sits around there and tries his best. This is my second comment. I wanted to welcome Lorena Biassotti. I think she'll be a good add-on.

Anyway, so I'm here 40 years in this town and I've seen the system of education going down. There's a lot of problems and a lot of partisan in here. You have to make sure that these schools function proper. Very simple. Open university to educate teachers in here, so they can become graduate in universities in Nevada, to become teachers in the school district. You need that. You

Anthony Manesa:

need good teachers. You need good paying teachers. We don't have to get people from outside. You have to do it in here. You have the money, you have the resources. This is a very rich county.

The other thing that I want to see tonight, I was watching these three people in here tonight. This is my recommendation, and I'm going to be very straightforward to you. I think Jhone Ebert, she did a fantastic job. She's accurate. She answered the questions to the point, exactly how she's going to do it and the way she wants to do it. The Ben Shuldiner guy I didn't like. I think he was acting a lot. He was answering too many questions. It looks like he was selling something.

And the third guy, looking back, this Jesse Welsh, he's very nice, very pleasant. He's bureaucratic and he has a lot of problems in schools in Arizona. You know that he called the cops on the parents in Arizona because he was not doing his job. And the board in Arizona wouldn't listen. And the people went to confront him at his home and he called the police. We don't need to call the police in here. That's why you are the board here, to fix the problems. And you have to listen to your consciences and you have to see, why is Isaac so successful in his school in Rancho?

I live on that district. I love that district. I don't want to go live in Summerlin. I lived there for 40 years. Why is he so successful in his class? Because he's got skills. He's not just a teacher. So, I want you to reconsider tonight, and I have to back some of the people. Because if you're going to make a mistake, you're going to be blamed for it. The people are going to talk about you in Las Vegas, that they really don't like you, they hate you, that you do not know what you're doing, they insult you, they talk about you everywhere else. You don't need that.

You need to fix the problems that we need in the school. Very simple. Number one, you get the right teachers, you open university, you teach them in here, and you do afterschool programs for the kids. I don't care. Not summer, afterschool programs. The kids need to learn English. It's very important.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you so much. I'm going to invite our board liaison just to repeat one more time the information that you shared earlier, to be included to a certain email address. And then, also answer the question of, if you've already submitted a letter, could we, as staff, put it into that email address so that it could be part of the BoardDocs?

Joe Caruso:

Madam President, so Joe Caruso for the record. So, first on the agenda, and we post this on BoardDocs, ccscd.net, trustee's page, and you can see where the agenda's posted. So, for tonight's agenda, it is listed on the top of page two. It says, "Written public comments may be submitted to board meeting, mtgcomments@nv.ccsd.net after the agenda has been posted." So, the agenda for the 13th is posted, so that would qualify anything submitted now, and at least eight business hours prior to the scheduled start of the meeting. So, eight hours prior to 5:00 PM would be what? 9:00 AM? I'm doing math backwards. So, by 9:00 AM Thursday morning, March 13th.

So, anything that is submitted prior to that timeframe would then be added in BoardDocs, so that you, as a board, would see it as submitted written public comment. And it would be noted as the...

Joe Caruso:

Instead of it saying reference material, it would say written public comment and then the date. And then, anything received after that deadline and prior to the meeting adjourning will be uploaded to BoardDocs within the appropriate item the next business day. So, staff, the next morning, they would upload it into BoardDocs. And in perpetuity, it would stay attached to that item. Again, as Trustee Zamora said, it would be very helpful if they wrote written public comment, superintendent search. So, then, we know to link it to the item versus putting it at the end of the agenda in public comment and we know where it's tied to.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. And then, Mr. Caruso, if they've already submitted a letter, like back in February 23rd, the focus groups that we had invited previously?

Joe Caruso:

So, if I'm hearing you, when you say submitted a letter, are you saying submitted a letter to the constituent email account? Or are you saying submitted a letter to the board meeting public account? Because they're two separate accounts. And that would be a really good clarifying point.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

I'm going to ask Trustee Williams, I mean...

Yvette Williams:

I would never do your job. I told her [inaudible 04:53:55].

We sent it to the constituents, so each of your emails. I don't know what the term is. I sent it to each individual email on February 23rd.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

So, knowing that comment, that it was sent to the constituent email, what is your advice?

Joe Caruso:

So, I'm going to say this respectfully to this amazing person I've known for many years and admire, it would be better for her to resubmit it to the board meeting comments. Here's why.

There's 11 of you. I just sent you three more emails that just came in now. They come in all hours of the day, as you all know, because some of you write me back right when I send them to you. So, all hours of the day, they come in. I don't want to pick the wrong email. And that's a lot to put on me to say that that's the email that you want on the agenda, especially with such a high-stakes item.

I would highly recommend and request that they resubmit it to board meeting comments, so I know for sure that is the email that they want to attach to this agenda item. That would be my request.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:
Thank you for that clarity.

Adjourn: 9:57 p.m.

Motion to adjourn.

Motion: Esparza-Stoffregan Second: Biassotti Vote: Unanimous

Motion passed.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Okay, I would entertain a motion for adjournment. Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan?

Trustee Esparza-Stoffregan:

I make the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:57.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Thank you. Trustee Biassotti?

Trustee Biassotti:

I second. I second that motion.

Trustee Bustamante Adams:

Okay, I have a first and a second. Please cast your vote. That passes seven to zero. We are adjourned