



# SESSION SPOTLIGHT

**May 17, 2019**

With 17 days to go until sine die, this week brought about the long anticipated funding formula bill that could positively change how education is funded in Nevada. Meanwhile, committees worked hard to pass bills before tonight's Second House Committee deadline as well to try and reconcile any irregularities in the budgets.

## **SB543 - Funding Formula Bill**

The week started off with a bang as Senators Joyce Woodhouse and Mo Denis unveiled the much-awaited bill to update the nation's oldest funding formula - **SB543**. The new Woodhouse-Denis Education Funding Plan addresses the lack of transparency that was a common criticism of the Nevada Plan. It also eliminates the issue of "supplanting" so new revenue streams in the future "supplement" -- actually increase -- the total funding that goes toward education. Finally, it provides weights for students who need additional resources, such as English Language Learners, special education students, and at-risk students. CCSD released a [statement from Superintendent Dr. Jesus F. Jara](#) on Monday about the proposed bill. For more on what the bill does, please view the [summary provided by Applied Analysis](#). The bill is scheduled for its first hearing on [Tuesday, May 21 at 5 p.m.](#) in front of a joint committee of Senate Finance and Assembly Ways and Means.

It is important to note that **SB543** is not designed to address the issue of adequacy of education but rather to modernize the funding formula used to distribute education funds. Also, the new funding formula will not go into effect until the 2021-23 biennium.

## **AB309 - County Tax/Categorical Flexibility**

There are ongoing discussions to ensure budgets for school districts include the proposed 3 percent raises for District employees and 2 percent in roll-up increases.

One piece of the puzzle introduced this week by Speaker Jason Frierson was a heavily amended **AB309** at Tuesday night's Assembly Ways and Means hearing. The bill opens up \$13.164 million in categorical dollars that CCSD can use to support the operations of the District. The bill also creates a separate account that school districts must set aside to pay for teacher salaries.

Another key component of the bill is that it allows County Commissioners to raise the sales tax by one quarter of one percent. In Clark County, that would be an increase from 8.25 percent to 8.5 percent. These funds could then be used for pre-k, adult education, incentives for school employees, and others that could potentially free up funds for the District to use on teacher pay.

CCSD testified in support and continues to work with Speaker Frierson and the Clark County Commission to make sure the District is able to receive these funds.

### **School Safety Funds**

Early this week, **SB545** was introduced to put all the revenue from the marijuana excise tax into the Distributive School Account instead of school safety. The Governor's budget originally dedicated the funds to funding the recommendations from the Governor's Statewide School Safety Task Force. On Thursday's joint meeting of Senate Finance and Assembly Ways and Means, \$30.5 million was cut from school safety measures. About \$17.5 million in facility enhancements were cut, leaving only about \$7.5 million that would go only to rural school districts. Some legislators argued that Clark and Washoe could utilize bond funds or a sales tax levy for facility enhancements. Superintendent Jara stated he is concerned by this cut due to the recent increase of guns on campus, threats made against schools, as well as a tragic shooting on a CCSD campus this school year. CCSD will continue to advocate for additional funding to provide more adults on campuses and improve facilities to enhance school safety.

### **SB469 School District Reorganization - Work Session**

On Thursday, in the Assembly Committee on Education work session, the committee passed **SB469**. This bill removes the cap on the number of schools that School Associate Superintendents can supervise. The bill would also consider transportation and utilities to be "restricted dollars" so they would no longer require Service Level Agreements. The bill allows the allocation of funds to local school precincts to be projected by future enrollment as opposed to enrollment from previous quarters, which we believe will allow for a more accurate enrollment number at the beginning of the school year. There were no amendments added to this bill.

### **AB88 Projected Enrollment - Work Session**

On Thursday night's Senate Finance work session, the committee passed **AB88**. The bill extends deadlines for school districts to submit the average daily enrollment report to the next business day if the deadline falls on a holiday or a weekend. Similar to **SB469**, **AB88** also allows the allocation of funds to the local school precincts to be estimated based on future enrollment. There were no amendments added to this bill.

As always, you can find the full list of bills we are tracking [here](#).

### [Current Scheduled Meetings for the Week of May 20, 2019](#)

The "[Calendar of Meetings](#)" on the Nevada Legislature Web site is always up to date.

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