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April 29, 2003

The Honorable Sandra Tiffany
Nevada Senate
401 South Carson Street
Carson City, NV 89701

Dear Senator Tiffany,

I understand that you and members of your committee are considering issues related to Nevada school district organization. I and my colleagues admire your efforts in this regard.

I have reviewed the summary recommendations submitted by Management Analysis & Planning, Inc. in its prior report to the Nevada legislature on this topic. Unless matters have materially changed in the seven years since our report, I believe that our recommendations to you and your colleagues are still quite sensible. It is possible that the underlying factual basis on which our conclusions and recommendations were premised may need updating. However, I am confident that the bulk of what we had to suggest remains valid.

I and my MAP colleagues stand ready to be of whatever assistance your state government should deem appropriate. My best wishes.

Sincerely,

James W. Guthrie

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individual school. Additional information concerning charter schools may be found within Chapter 5 of the final Map Report (see Appendix B), pages 127 through 138 of this bulletin.

- **Alternative Boundary Configurations**—Various alternative district boundary configurations were attempted by the consultant. As reported to the subcommittee, it was not possible to form school districts of optimum enrollment size while equalizing financing (property and sales taxes), without also creating districts with sizable minority populations. Conversely, when boundaries were drawn to avoid creating majority minority districts, great disparities in relative wealth were created within the proposed districts. The conclusion drawn by the consultant was that, without some mechanism to equalize school district wealth for school construction purposes, any proposed change to district boundaries would result in similar demographic or fiscal inequities. Additionally, the current method of collecting and distributing per-pupil funding under the Nevada Plan would need to continue at the county level. Technical solutions to the problems associated with boundary changes are further complicated by the continuing pattern of explosive growth experienced within the urban areas of the county, along with the related decision to build large schools to accommodate the growth. The consultants suggest that the district implement alternative approaches designed to increase responsiveness, or that one or two smaller districts first be attempted.

Additional detail concerning the Clark County School District options may be found in the final MAP Report (see Appendix B), beginning at page 151 in this bulletin.

All Other Districts

Specific observations concerning the remaining school districts are as follow:

- **Carson City/Douglas County School Districts**—A joint venture of the two school districts might allow for the construction of a new high school near the common border of the two counties.
- **Douglas County School District**—A proposed new district in the Zephyr Cove area of Lake Tahoe fares well under most criteria. Such a change, however, would require significant additional state funding and create great disparities in capital outlay capability. To mitigate this situation, sales and property taxes would need to continue to be collected county-wide and distributed on an equitable per-pupil basis. In addition, statewide equalization of capital funding would eliminate problems with capacity for capital outlay. A "Lake" school district, which would combine the Lake Tahoe portions of Douglas and Washoe Counties would face similar difficulties.

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