

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**Seventy-Fourth Session  
February 12, 2007**

The Committee on Education was called to order by Chair Bonnie Parnell at 3:48 p.m., on Monday, February 12, 2007, in Room 3142 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4401 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. Copies of the minutes, including the Agenda ([Exhibit A](#)), the Attendance Roster ([Exhibit B](#)), and other substantive exhibits are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau and on the Nevada Legislature's website at [www.leg.state.nv.us/74th/committees/](http://www.leg.state.nv.us/74th/committees/). In addition, copies of the audio record may be purchased through the Legislative Counsel Bureau's Publications Office (email: [publications@lcb.state.nv.us](mailto:publications@lcb.state.nv.us); telephone: 775-684-6835).

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Assemblywoman Bonnie Parnell, Chair  
Assemblywoman Debbie Smith, Vice Chair  
Assemblyman Bob Beers  
Assemblyman David Bobzien  
Assemblyman Mo Denis  
Assemblyman Joseph P. (Joe) Hardy  
Assemblyman Ruben Kihuen  
Assemblyman Garn Mabey  
Assemblyman Harvey J. Munford  
Assemblyman Tick Segerblom  
Assemblyman Lynn D. Stewart

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Carol M. Stonefield, Committee Policy Analyst  
Kelly Troescher, Committee Secretary  
Rachel Pilliod, Committee Manager  
Trisha Moore, Committee Assistant



**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Dr. Mary Pierczynski, President, Nevada Association of School Superintendents; Superintendent, Carson City School District  
Sheila Moulton, President, Nevada Association of School Boards  
Paul Dugan, Vice President, Nevada Association of School Superintendents; Superintendent, Washoe County School District  
Dr. Walt Rulffes, Superintendent, Clark County School District  
Joyce Haldeman, Executive Director, Community and Government Relations, Clark County School District  
John Mendoza, Judge, Clark County Latin Chamber of Commerce  
Dr. Rene Cantu, Board Member, Las Vegas Latin Chamber of Commerce, Education Committee Member, Nevada State College Faculty  
Joe Enge, Education Policy Analyst, Nevada Policy Research Institute  
Donna Anspach-Hoffman, Nevadans for Quality Education  
Terry Hickman, Executive Director, Nevada State Education Association  
David Schumann, Nevada Committee for Full Statehood  
Rick Wendling, Carson City Seniors Small Business Persons Coalition  
Peggy Lear Bowen, Concerned Citizen, Washoe County, Nevada  
Robert Crowell, Concerned Citizen, Carson City, Nevada  
Barbara Myers, Nevada State Board of Education  
Alison Turner, Nevada Parent Teacher Association

**Chair Parnell:**

[Meeting called to order at 3:48 p.m. Roll called.] We have a quorum. Good afternoon to everyone. We are videoconferencing today to Las Vegas. We have a lot to do today. Committee members, if you recall when we met last week, I made note that we would be having presentations today, this coming Wednesday, and then two presentations next week. This is your opportunity to ask questions, to become familiar with the material. I want each and every one of you to feel comfortable that you fully understand the issues that we will be dealing with as Education Committee members. Hopefully you took some time over the weekend to look over your iNVEST copy you received last week. With that, today we will be hearing from the Nevada Association of Superintendents and the Nevada Association of School Boards regarding their iNVEST '07 proposal. For the new Committee members, I would like to point out this is the third year the School Boards and Superintendents have brought their iNVEST proposal to the Nevada Legislature. Those of us who have been around for that time have seen the commonality and consistency of the material presented. At this time I will ask Dr. Mary Pierczynski, Mr. Dugan, and Ms. Haldeman to come to the table in Carson City.

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski, President, Nevada Association of School Superintendents; Superintendent, Carson City School District:**

Thank you for taking some time this weekend to read through iNVEST '07. iNVEST is the response to the question: "What is needed to improve student achievement in Nevada?" It is supported by all 17 school districts, 17 superintendents, and the Nevada Association of School Boards (NASB). With me today to talk about iNVEST is Sheila Moulton, president of the NASB. She is in Las Vegas. She is going to talk about the history of iNVEST. This is not the first time we have been to the Legislature with iNVEST. We had iNVEST '03, iNVEST '05, and now iNVEST '07. Secondly, we will hear from Paul Dugan, the superintendent in Washoe County. He will talk about having adequate basic support for our schools in the State. Third, you will hear from Walt Rulffes, superintendent in Clark County. He will talk about retaining a quality workforce. Finally, I will talk about achievement and how we can increase student achievement in the State of Nevada. With that, we would like to begin with Sheila Moulton in Las Vegas.

**Sheila Moulton, President, Nevada Association of School Boards:**

Thank you. [Read from prepared text, ([Exhibit C](#)). Submitted two exhibits for Committee members, ([Exhibit D](#)), ([Exhibit E](#)).]

**Chair Parnell:**

Mr. Dugan, before you start, I want to acknowledge something about Sheila Moulton. I think it sends a message. Many of us in this room, in Las Vegas, and across this State have worked in various capacities to try to do what we think is best for the kids in this State. Sheila, Debbie (Smith), and I go back 30 years in Nevada Parent Teacher Association (PTA). I want to acknowledge Sheila for not only her work as a school board trustee, but also the many years she gave to education prior to becoming an elected official.

**Paul Dugan, Vice President, Nevada Association of School Superintendents; Superintendent, Washoe County School District:**

As Mrs. Moulton referred to the triangle that illustrates our basic tenets, so will I with regard to Initiative One, which asks to include annual inflation in the Distributive School Account (DSA). Without adequately funding the base of the triangle, we will not be able to effectively address the other two segments. While there may be debate about which iNVEST initiatives should be funded, there is no debate regarding Initiative One. Without adequate funding of the DSA, which includes annual inflation costs, school districts will need to continue to take from educational programs to pay for the operational cost necessary to keep our school doors open. School boards cannot create or increase revenue strengths. Allocations must be realistic in terms of expenses

they are supposed to fund. In this initiative, we are asking for a three percent inflation factor to be built into the DSA budget.

Initiative Two asks to continue augmented funding for books, educational supplies, and equipment. As many of you on this Committee know, this Legislature in the past two legislative sessions has funded additional funding for textbooks. With the continued increase in the cost of textbooks, instructional supplies, and equipment, the past funding provided by the Legislature has helped school districts meet the expectation that all students have access to textbooks and instructional materials. It is important that the allowable use of this funding be maintained and expanded to include computer software, and most importantly, library books. These are critical components to the instructional materials necessary to maintain a quality educational program.

The other issue we hope this Committee will be able to address is consider changes in the funding mechanism. In essence, that means that there is currently a bar that is set by which all districts must meet with regards to expenditures on textbooks. However, when a district, such as Washoe or Clark County School Districts, puts significant additional funds towards textbook adoption, it raises the bar for all districts with regards to how much they need to spend. This certainly has a significant impact on our smaller districts. We hope the Committee will be able to rectify that issue.

Initiative Three is about protecting the ending fund balance. School districts, as is the case with successful businesses, must be able to maintain an adequate ending fund balance that helps protect the business from unanticipated costs. While we, as superintendents, will continue to maintain the critical importance of higher teacher pay, this ending fund balance must be protected from contract negotiations. Individual school boards must be able to examine their budgets and create policy that sets ending fund balances not to exceed 8.3 percent. As an example in the past year, Washoe County School Board passed a policy that sets the ending fund balance between 2 and 4 percent. Currently the regulation says that it is an administrative code. That has proven to be not as effective as we believe it needs to be. That is why we are asking for a statute that would protect the ending fund balance.

**Chair Parnell:**

I would like to allow the Committee to ask any questions about Initiatives One, Two, or Three. Hopefully there is a way that we can solve the problem about the fiscally unsound process of the \$50 student textbook fenced-off money. The way it was originally written, you had to spend so much money in a certain category to get that money the next year. You would find at the end of the year, there was money virtually having to be expended on something that was

not critical. To me, that is a flaw that we have allowed continue. I think it needs to be corrected this session. Do you have language that will do that? Do we know how that mechanism is going to be corrected?

**Paul Dugan:**

We absolutely appreciate your willingness to ask us to draft language. We certainly would do that. We do not have it at this time. Thank you for the recognition, especially for the smaller school districts who get hurt most significantly by this.

**Chair Parnell:**

I met with some school librarians. Right now, library books are not included in this. You might end up spending money on something that was not really the wisest expenditure of money, yet our libraries are going without new library books because they are not part of this fenced-off category. The whole area needs to be cleaned up this session. Hopefully we can work together on doing that. Questions, Committee? [There were none.]

**Dr. Walt Rulffes, Superintendent, Clark County School District:**

There has already been a reference to the pyramid in the graphics you are seeing. I would like to address the center portion of that pyramid: to attract and retain a high quality workforce. If any members of the Committee were to ask just about any employer, "What is the main ingredient for your success as a business?" it more than likely would be the quality of the employees. We have that issue as a top issue. It is Initiative Four in the iNVest program. Let me put this in a context: the community, the Legislature, the policy makers, the district, the principals, and the teachers are all rightfully increasing the expectation of output from the students. However, the context I want to present to you is that, in many cases, we are asking the schools to increase the performance of students in mathematics and reading, and now adding science, and we are unable to provide the teachers to accommodate the expectations that we are asking them to produce. It is in that context that we are asking the Legislature to assist us in assuring that we are able to bring in high-quality personnel to provide the expectations of the community. The teacher shortage has brought on the need for substitutes. Mrs. Moulton did a great job in describing the effect of rolling over substitutes in a classroom and the impact on students of a different starting point and different ending point of substitutes that come in to cover the classrooms. Throughout the State, we are facing increasing teacher shortages. We can address hundreds of classrooms that are being covered by substitutes. This is not to diminish the competence of substitutes other than they are not specialized in the areas in which they are trying to teach. The cost of living is such that we now have a different marketplace that we are competing with. We are no longer able to draw upon the virtues of Nevada as a

good place to work, as much as we are to deal with the financial aspects of the costs of living versus what we are able to pay. Against that background the iNVEST Program includes a recommendation to the Legislature to increase teacher salaries by at least 5 percent. While many people think that is inadequate, we recognize the fiscal limitations of the State. We do ask that you give strong consideration to the 5 percent request that is included in the iNVEST program for all employees. I also would like to add that in the superintendents' deliberations and development of iNVEST, we have agreed to support the pay for performance, which has been an issue that has been discussed for many years, but never has been implemented in this State to any great extent. The empowerment schools that are up and running in some parts of the State already do have a formula for incentive pay. We are happy to provide that to the Legislature, and we hope that we will be at the table to discuss any variations that may be proposed.

**Chair Parnell:**

I think it is important to also note that Pay for Performance legislation was passed in the 2005 Session. It was part of Assembly Bill No. 580 of the 73rd Session. It allowed all the school districts in the State to sit down and design their own Pay for Performance package and determine how individuals or schools would be recognized for performance gains. We will also have an opportunity this session to hear back from 16 of the 17 school districts that have already implemented those pay for performance plans. Not only can we hear about the ones of the empowerment schools, but we also are anxious to hear from the 16 school districts regarding the plans that they designed as well.

**Dr. Walt Rulffes:**

Excellent. I hope that some of the data other than student performance is also included such as, for example, the turn-over rate. We have noticed in some of the schools where we had Performance Pay programs that the performance was based on mentoring as opposed to on test scores. It was also installed on a test basis. I hope that kind of data will be included in your analysis.

**Assemblyman Hardy:**

I am looking at the cost of the 5 percent salary increases. The 5 percent increase is \$110 million. I am not quite sure about the \$231 million. Is that because of more teachers being hired? I would think that another 5 percent on top of \$110 million would be closer to \$140 million. Is that a misprint, or is that for real?

**Dr. Walt Rulffes:**

I am going to have to yield to someone in Reno who has the document. I do not have that in front of me. I apologize.

**Assemblyman Hardy:**

While I have the microphone, I will have to admit this is probably the best educational thing I have ever seen before this Committee. This is wonderful. It is all there. Thank you.

**Dr. Walt Rulffes:**

We are happy to provide a breakdown of all the calculations in the document.

**Joyce Haldeman, Executive Director, Community and Government Relations,  
Clark County School District:**

The number is correct, Dr. Hardy. It is because of the calculations that are used with the roll-ups as they go from one year to the next. I can assure you that we had somebody work those numbers who knows it and could explain it better than I can. I will get a written explanation for you about how they come to that number.

**Dr. Walt Rulffes:**

Initiative Five is for health benefits. One of the important aspects in recruiting teachers into Nevada is that the health program has been respectable. We ask the Legislature maintain that. We should also point out that the Legislature has improved the program to assist retirees. The funding has been there for that. The iNVEST program asks that the Legislature maintain funding to preserve both of those programs.

Initiative Six is incentives. We have had an incentive program during a previous administration. There was quite a breakthrough in terms of the signing bonus for teachers. A \$2,000 amount was approved and funded by the Legislature for at least the last four years. We found that to be very helpful in recruiting teachers. Given the increased cost of living, we ask that the Legislature increase that to \$2,500, which reflects a similar level in terms of stable dollars to what it was back when it was passed four years ago. We also asked that the retirement credit that is currently in place, a one-fifth retirement credit for teachers who go into specialized areas, be preserved but extended to enable teachers to have more options. It may have been interpreted on the part of the administration that maybe this is not as effective as it could be. We acknowledge that. We think it would be more effective to redirect the dollars to continue in the incentive areas and not to shift it to other programs.

**Chair Parnell:**

I believe last session we attempted to address the issue of the one-fifth retirement, but I am not sure why it did not get changed. I think it stayed on the other side of the Building. We recognize that a 23-year-old coming into the teaching profession who is promised this one-fifth year of retirement will not understand what it is all about. We need to have a variety of incentives when we are looking at keeping teachers in those hard-to-fill classes and at our hard-to-staff schools. Questions?

**Assemblyman Munford:**

I agree with you about increasing incentives to keep teachers in certain at-risk areas. My district is the west Las Vegas area. I think we had something in place in 2005 and tried to, in some way, control the turn over rate that took place in my district. I do not know if the retirement credit will keep teachers. We need a little more strength to keep them all there. What is the status of that now? Has the turn over rate been minimized, or is it still at the same rate it was prior to 2005?

**Dr. Walt Rulffes:**

In reference to Clark County, Mr. Munford, the one-fifth retirement credit has helped hold some of the teachers that are already there, but it has not done as much as we had hoped to bring new teachers in. There is so much research that it takes at least three years for a teacher to get up to speed, to be part of the team, and to be as effective at an optimum level that we want. We believe that if the teacher has more options, some of the teachers may choose to go for the retirement credit by paying for it themselves with the additional incentive moneys. As Chairwoman Parnell indicated, if a teacher has rent to pay or groceries to buy, they would perhaps opt for the dollars and use them in different ways. Clearly the incentives have made a difference overall in attracting teachers to the districts and somewhat in terms of retaining teachers at the hard-to-fill and the at-risk positions. We think it is especially important for not only the at-risk teachers, but also the math and science teachers that we are trying to recruit and pay an additional amount to.

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

I am going to be talking about the last of the three tenets, Improving Student Achievement. Initiative Seven is designed to provide programs to ensure progress for all students. All of us are old enough to remember that we used to be able to just go to school, sit in the seat, put in our time, and get a diploma at the end of 12 or 13 years. Now it is not that way. Now our students have to pass a High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE). There is more accountability. We are all better off for having that. We know that we have some students who need extra help. With No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and with the current



accountability, which all of us welcome, we know we have to provide more for certain students. We got a start with that with S.B. No. 404 of the 73rd Session. We were able to have 512 grants throughout the State. Schools wrote the grants, and they were able to start special programs to help our students. We have been thankful for that, and we would like to build on the successful programs launched with S.B. 404 and see those dollars continue in the school funding. It has been extremely helpful. We have been able to start some exciting programs in the 2006-2007 school year. There are math coaches throughout the State in our elementary schools. We also have literacy coaches. We are helping many students.

We need to allow flexibility to schools and districts to meet the needs of specific student populations. There is an increase of English Language Learners (ELL) in our State. We need more time for these students. We need money for intersessions and summer school. We have had some successful programs in Washoe, Clark, Douglas, and Storey Counties. Storey County had a success story with some extra money as far as getting high school students through the HSPE. It is the flexibility of spending, which allows us extra time to help students who really need it, that we are asking for in Initiative Seven.

Initiative Eight provides funding for ELL. We have had a huge growth of ELL in this State. From FY 2005 to FY 2006, we had a 31 percent increase in ELL. We now have over 92 languages spoken in our schools in Nevada. That comes with many challenges. Our ELL students are our fastest-growing population. In FY 2006, we spent about \$20 million to give these students extra help so they can meet the challenges of NCLB. That was money that came out of regular school budgets, our General Fund, because there is no special funding for them. The first year these students are in our country and our school districts, they take the tests that all the students take to meet the criteria for NCLB. The first year we do not count the scores for making "adequate yearly progress" (AYP), but we must test them because we need their participation. The second year they are in the country, their schools count for whether that school makes AYP or not. No longer can students who do not speak the language sit in the back of the classroom and work at their own pace. We have to give these students extra time. That is what we are asking for with this extra funding. We are requesting a weighted funding formula. That has been supported by the A.C.R. 10 of the 73rd Session Adequacy Study. What would we do with the money? We would have smaller class size, we would have sheltered instruction observation protocol (the SIOP training for our teachers), and we would do newcomer academies around the State. One of the most important things we would like to see is more Teachers of English as a Second Language (TESL) endorsements. We would like to give our teachers those additional skills when

they have these students pushed into their classrooms. Supplemental materials are also important.

**Assemblywoman Smith:**

When we have teachers who have the TESL endorsement, particularly if they get that endorsement through any State or local funding, I would like us to require that it be recorded so we can be using those skills. I wondered how the superintendents would feel about putting that kind of caveat in this discussion. You can think about it and get back with your group and come back. That is one of the things that has bothered me. If we are going to be funding that, we should be requiring that they are using it. I know we have some instances where it is not happening.

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

Thank you. We have not discussed that, but we would be happy to.

Initiative Nine is the full-day kindergarten Initiative. Our initial results of all-day kindergarten in Nevada show positive results. We would like to continue the implementation. We feel all-day kindergarten is important, and we are strong proponents of it for all children. We are certainly strong supporters of it for our at-risk children who live at the poverty level. We are asking for continued implementation of all-day kindergarten. That would also include funding facilities with that initiative.

**Chair Parnell:**

I am only looking at the PowerPoint ([Exhibit D](#)) and not the extensive language on this. Did you put any parameters in there about your expansion? Have you expanded the criteria that we have now for at-risk, or does your number reflect full-day across the state? How did you frame that?

**Joyce Haldeman:**

These numbers reflect the expansion of all-day kindergarten for every kindergarten student in the State plus all the facilities that would be needed. We wanted to put in the full scope, recognizing that we might be able to work our way toward it.

**Assemblyman Hardy:**

In looking at the pyramid, do we have the ability to recruit teachers in the rural areas in order to implement full-day kindergarten in every superintendent's jurisdiction in the State?

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

Our biggest problem with recruiting teachers is in the hard-to-fill positions: math, science, English as a Second Language, and special education. That is where we have a lot of difficulty. We feel confident that we can recruit enough kindergarten teachers in the State.

**Assemblyman Hardy:**

The \$28 million you have allocated for add-ons, modules, portables, or some other type of structure—for how many children are we talking? How many seats in each classroom? Do you have those broken down into the numbers like that?

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

If you look at page 18 ([Exhibit E](#)), you will see a breakdown of the modules and the classrooms. We have 25 students in the classrooms.

**Assemblyman Hardy:**

How many kindergarteners are we looking at in the State of Nevada—and more particularly in Clark County—that is obviously growing?

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

Our projections for FY 2008 are 32,749 kindergarteners in Clark County.

**Assemblyman Stewart:**

Am I to understand that we are going to have half of all our kindergarten students in portables? How, then, are we going to get them from the portables into a regular classroom? I do not know if you ever taught in a portable, but it is not a pleasant experience.

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

We have many portables in our school district. I know what you are talking about. Right now the programs are half-day programs. There is a class in the morning and a class in the afternoon. We need the additional space so we can run the programs all day. You would have one class in the classroom that now has two classes.

**Assemblyman Stewart:**

Still, if we have 50 children and 25 of them go all day in a regular classroom where we did have 50 going in the regular class, then we are going to have 25 in the portables. Is that correct?

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

Right. Ms. Haldeman, do you want to address what you have done in Clark County?

**Joyce Haldeman:**

In Clark County, the way we would do it is by constructing temporary space. We add a module to the playground area. We put a 4th or 5th grade class in the portable classrooms so we can keep the kindergarten students in the class within the building of the school. Our portables are now outfitted quite nicely. We actually have some teachers who prefer to teach in the portable. They like the isolation they get because they have fewer interruptions.

**Assemblyman Mabey:**

I have a question on the full-day kindergarten for the rural communities. In talking to my colleagues from the rural counties, I sense that they would rather use the funds that might be allocated for full-day kindergarten for other things, such as vocational technology training or other things that they would deem more important. Perhaps Clark County wants full-day kindergarten for everyone, but do the rural counties really want full-day kindergarten, or would they rather have those funds and use them in a different way?

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

Flexibility is always a key issue for the obvious differences we have in the districts. Our initial push of full-day kindergarten is for at-risk students. In our lengthy discussions in our superintendents group we did not have opposition to full-day kindergarten.

**Assemblyman Segerblom:**

Are you saying that you are going to limit the class size to 25 in all-day kindergarten?

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

Yes. The numbers that you see in iNVEST are predicated on 25 students per class.

**Assemblyman Segerblom:**

Will that be in the law?

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

There is no class size designated in the law for kindergarten.

**Assemblyman Segerblom:**

That is my question. Would this have implementation at 25?

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

Our numbers reflect 25. If the Legislature wanted to make that part of the *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS), then that would be your prerogative.

**Chair Parnell:**

To continue on the class-size issue, I remember in the early 1990s when we were first looking at class-size reduction. It never made sense to me that we would start children in kindergarten classrooms that had maybe 40 little ones in each class. They go from a tremendous kindergarten experience to a 16-to-1 first grade classroom. If we are going to have more full-day kindergarten programs, I think it only makes sense to have a reasonable class size with those kindergarten students. We truly want academic programs such as teaching reading—not what some call "babysitting" or "extended daycare." If you want an academic program, you have to have a class size that is manageable. Another thing that many people do not know is that Carson City has been fortunate, for as long as I can remember, to always have kindergarten aides. They have always had two adults in that classroom. That is not the case in most of the other school districts. We need to at least consider that if we did not do a class size reduction, we should consider the importance of more adult control in a classroom full of five-year-olds.

**Assemblyman Stewart:**

Is it true that the all-day curriculum and the half-day curriculum are exactly the same? It is just more emphasis on the various disciplines?

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

If I may relate a little experience here in Carson City, we have a full-day program at Empire Elementary School. We have a similar program, but it is much more expanded. Our half-day program is really only a little over two hours a day if you look across the State. It is not a four-hour, full-blown program by the time you maneuver children in and out and you break out the specialty. It is really only a couple of hours. In our full-day program, we are able to teach math every day. In our half-day program, we were able to spend about 40 to 50 minutes per week on math. The emphasis was on literacy and language acquisition. That is what we were primarily able to do. A couple of days a week, we were able to introduce the students to math. We have a similar curriculum, but it is much more expanded. Now, as I said, we are able to do math every day. It is not just Carson City, but throughout the State that the program is expanded. We expect these students to be much better prepared for first grade.

Initiative Ten is on professional development for student achievement. We know that professional development is absolutely essential for high-quality

instruction in the classroom. We are really seeing the need for that with our increased ELL in the classroom. Currently the law provides 180 student school days in the student's year. Five of those days can be used for professional development. We all know that when the teachers are out of the classroom learning how to become better teachers, our students are not in the classroom learning. We are requesting that five additional days be added to teacher contracts enabling us to ensure 180 days of student instruction.

**Assemblyman Segerblom:**

Are you indicating there would be a 2.5 percent increase for every teacher?

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

Yes. The calculations are based on the cost per day of all teachers, and then multiplied by the five additional days. It is based on an average salary.

**Assemblyman Segerblom:**

Right. They would have to work for it, but teachers would get a 2.5 percent higher salary per year?

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

Yes. They would be working for the five days.

**Chair Parnell:**

During the interim, the Legislative Committee on Education discussed professional development and time away from the classroom. As a former teacher, this might be the one I get the most excited about. I think we put so many demands on what the teacher has to do. If you are contracting with a group like Pulliam that does teacher training, teachers are being trained at a level that we have never seen before. That is all well and good, but I have always been very upset by the fact that some of that training is taking the teacher out of the classroom during instructional time. I think we have to address that this session and leave knowing the teachers are with their students every day teaching and all of those other demands happen outside classroom time. This is one I personally applaud.

**Assemblyman Munford:**

In my experience with professional development, it seems like many teachers took it as a day to be absent. I do not think many teachers have taken it very seriously. I can see there are some benefits and some positive aspects, but in my experience many used it for a four-day vacation. It always seems to fall on a Friday or a Monday. Even the children get four or five days off. In my teaching experience, they would have Thursday off, Friday as a teacher development day, and Monday as a holiday. How many days is that out of the

classroom for the students? I do not know how many teachers take it seriously. I took it very seriously.

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

We have many teachers who take it very seriously. We take it very seriously. Believe me, with the challenges that our teachers are facing, we do not have people skipping out. Most of our professional development is done in the middle of the week, so it is not too conducive to long vacations. The accountability is so strong now.

**Assemblyman Denis:**

My concern is that we are taking teachers out of the classroom. I like the idea of having these extra days. I am also concerned that when we spend a lot of time testing, it is more time when the children are out of the classroom. If we can do initiatives where we were increasing the number of days the children have instruction, as opposed to decreasing it by taking teachers out or testing all the time, I think we will find that education would get better.

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

Thank you for bringing that. As you read Initiative Ten, that is part of it as well. This would serve to ensure and guarantee 180 days of instruction. It will also help us accommodate some of the testing requirements that in our schools.

Initiative Eleven is about classroom discipline and school safety. In this particular initiative, we are addressing a problem of disruptive students in the classroom. We are requesting money to provide effective discipline options for students, to provide safety for the students in the classroom, and to try to provide another learning environment for students who have difficulty maintaining their behavior in a regular classroom. We have had several examples of successful programs. You have all heard of the C.P. Squires program in which they hired a behavioral specialist. With their S.B. No. 404 of the 73rd Session money, Washoe County hired a social worker to try to work with some of these families and students who have extra problems. We would like to have some pilot programs to allow some flexibility on how we can deal with students with real behavioral issues. I think all of us who have been in the classroom know how important that is for the student who is acting out and needs individual help or more attention, for the 29 other students in the class who have the right to an education as well, and for the teachers who need to be able to concentrate on their work and the teaching process, not the discipline process.

Initiative Twelve is on career and technical education (CTE). We know that CTE in our State is very important as 70 percent of the jobs in Nevada do not require

a four-year college degree. In this initiative, we are asking for support, again, to expand and to fund the CTE programs we have in our schools. It is a key issue to high school reform. We know that our CTE programs provide relevance and rigor. It does help reduce the number of dropouts in our high schools. We know that kids who are involved in CTE programs love what they are studying. They come to school, they finish, they study, and they pass the HSPE. We are requesting the career and technology support once again.

**Assemblyman Bobzien:**

I have heard anecdotally, at least in Washoe County, that there is tension between CTE and some of the goals as laid out by NCLB in terms of trying to meet AYP, specifically for teaching positions in some of the schools, such as drafting positions or someone who is teaching metal work and may not be as high of a priority for an individual school or a school district when they are having to address the challenges of making sure there is AYP in other areas. Is that something that does exist? Is it tension throughout the different districts?

**Paul Dugan:**

That is absolutely true. What is somewhat surprising is the reason that it exists. In fact, a strong CTE program will, in effect, help us meet a NCLB, perhaps much better than some of our current programs. In Washoe County School District, we have been spending a great deal of time trying to work with the community to try to work toward a CTE program at a much higher level than we currently are. You are right. In individual schools, sometimes because of the focus they need to put on math, science, and literacy, often times those programs can go by the wayside. We have to change that, certainly in Washoe County.

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

Carson City, obviously, is a much smaller county, but the CTE portion of our curriculum is extremely important to us. We have a culinary arts program from which 98-99 percent pass the HSPE and then graduate. I think it is important that we have those drawing cards for students who otherwise are not that excited about biology and algebra, but they certainly are going to work hard to get through those programs because they want to continue in whatever their technical vocation is, and they have to have a high school diploma. We would have more of these vocational programs in our schools if we could afford them. They are extremely expensive. We just put a \$140,000 fan system in our welding department in Carson High School. That is not uncommon throughout the State. They are expensive programs, and sometimes it is difficult to get the instructors. Believe me, throughout the State of Nevada they are critical.



**Dr. Walt Rulffes:**

There are two members from the community here that wanted to address the Committee on Initiative Eight: Judge Mendoza and Dr. Cantu. Would you be able to let them speak to Initiative Eight?

**Chair Parnell:**

I want to let the Committee finish their questions. Then we will turn it over to public comment. Are they in a time crunch, or are they willing to wait until the Committee has finished questioning the presenters?

**John Mendoza, Judge, Clark County Latin Chamber of Commerce:**

We are here and we are ready to wait.

**Chair Parnell:**

Great. I want to say something about CTE. As many of you know, I chaired the Subcommittee studying career and technical high schools. There are figures I have used again and again, but I think they are very stunning: the average high school drop-out rate across the State is about 6 percent; if you look at high school students who are enrolled in at least one career and technical class at their high school, it drops to 1.7 percent; if you look at students who are enrolled at a Southern Nevada technical high school, a stand-alone career and technical high school, that dropout number drops to below 1 percent. The case is pretty much made on how successful career and technical opportunities are for our high school students.

**Assemblyman Hardy:**

I am sitting here listening to the iNVEST presentation, and one of the phrases I keep hearing is "no child left behind." Sometimes I think we complain about the onerous things that we feel about NCLB. I am not sure whether we have used it to improve the educational opportunities for the children. I think that is where we are coming from on this Committee. What can we do for the children to not leave them behind? I applaud the presentation. I think we need to recognize that that conversation has been generated, quite frankly, from that NCLB. That is not meant to be partisan, just an observation.

**Assemblyman Stewart:**

Studies I have read from other countries and other states that are more successful than we are have a strong input from the business community as far as curriculum is concerned. Do you have committees of business people who have strong input on what is needed? In southern Nevada we have a big problem with business people saying that students out of our high schools are not prepared to take jobs in the business community.

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

Yes, we do have business people from our communities such as manufacturers, construction owners, et cetera, throughout the State who are involved in our technical education committees.

**Assemblywoman Smith:**

I wanted to also point out that the standards in this State that guide the curriculum were developed by committees that had business representatives on them who provided much insight in appropriate areas, especially on the Math, Economics, and Social Studies Committees.

**Assemblyman Beers:**

I am going down the figures that you have on page 23 ([Exhibit E](#)). With the incredible results of CTE, you only have the requested budget for it at less than half of what you have for the cost of inflation. You state that it is very expensive to put in, so why are the figures so low for CTE?

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

This was a recommendation of the Committee. That is why we have \$14 million.

**Assemblywoman Smith:**

With CTE comes a philosophical shift and mindset, changing the way we do business as much as putting a lot of money into it. Many of the CTE issues need one-shot funding. They need equipment and the ability to upgrade their equipment. I think that is part of why the number is what it is. I am sure it could be higher.

When you presented to the Committee on Education back in November, you talked about prioritizing. I thought that was happening in January. Did that happen, or did you decide not to prioritize?

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

We have a pyramid that shows our goals: we have to have basic support, we have to have teachers, and all of that is going to lead to student achievement. iNVEST is a consensus, and for us to sit and give you priority one, two, or three is unnecessary because we feel that all of the initiatives are important to improve student achievement in the State of Nevada. We have not given you a list. We understand that all of you are responsive to constituents who have their own priorities and that you have to listen to those. We are not sitting here saying, "Initiative Two is a top priority and Three is behind that." We feel each initiative is important and deserves your consideration. We appreciate that consideration.

**Assemblyman Munford:**

I direct this mostly toward the Clark County School Board of Trustees who are present: Is Clark County not already off and running on CTE? Are they proposing to build approximately four of five of them in various regions around Clark County? I think my district has been targeted for career and technical schools. As I have said before, I think it will do a great deal for high-risk and minority students—these programs have proven at vocational technology to be successful.

**Dr. Walt Rulffes:**

From Las Vegas, both we and the Board of Trustees are especially pleased with the emphasis the Committee has placed on the career and technical academies. I will briefly tell you the concept behind Clark County's major commitment to investment in those programs. First of all, with all the high school reform, it talks about small schools. The current technical academies are naturally divided into small houses, which simulates the small-school environment. The second thing is that it promotes choice where students choose to go to the school and participate in the program they are in. That, too, has proven to be something that engages students and leads to some of those good statistics that some of the Committee members were quoting. The third thing, to dwell on Mr. Munford's experience, it does bring in a richness of diversity into the programs because students are drawn from all over the community and from different communities. Also, there is a good deal of business input, not only in the curriculum, but also in the original design of those buildings. The current technical academies are somewhat of a natural to deal with many of the problems facing public education today. One final thing to cap this off: there is also a tradition of cooperation with higher education in the career and technical academies to align the curriculum and the standards to those expected of the community college and higher education. With that, again, we appreciate your support. If there is an interest in increasing the \$14 million, we will certainly accept that.

**Assemblyman Hardy:**

I am waiting for the empowerment school process to be addressed by one of the superintendents. I am taking a list of schools that want to be empowerment schools in the State. Is that even on the radar in somebody's program or budget? Where are we at with that?

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

The empowerment schools are not part of iNVEST '07. We are looking at more information on the conception of the empowerment schools. We would be happy to answer questions later when we know more and it is formulated better for all of us.

**Assemblyman Denis:**

I know the iNVEST program has been around for several years. I have always thought it was incredible that you could get 17 school districts to actually agree on something because the needs are so diverse. I am assuming iNVEST '07 has been updated. Are there other new things since you originally started the process that have not been addressed here and should be?

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

You are correct. Putting 17 superintendents in the room and coming up with consensus is no small trick. We have had very lengthy discussions. As has been reported, we had iNVEST '03 and iNVEST '05. This is iNVEST '07. You will see that the basic tenets and the initiatives are the same. We have updated and we have new information, but the initiative response to "How do we improve achievement of our Nevada students?" remains the same. We are not coming to you every session with a new laundry list of the latest "magic bullets" to resolve the issues that we face as educators in this State. We know you are on the journey with us, and we appreciate that. We are staying the course. You saw these initiatives in 2003, and you are seeing them again in 2007. They are still the important answers to that question.

**Assemblyman Kihuen:**

It is my understanding that the school districts are having a difficult time of hiring ELL teachers across the State. Obviously there is a need of them, now that 40 percent of the student population is Hispanic. What is being done to recruit more qualified ELL teachers? Do the schools currently have a preparation program for current teachers who might want to become ELL teachers?

**Paul Dugan:**

Attracting qualified second-language learner teachers is a challenge. That, in fact, should be something we address through attracting and retaining quality teachers, which is part of our iNVEST program. With regard to training within our own district, we are fortunate in Washoe County School District to have a second-language learner coordinator who spends a good part of her time looking within the area and trying to attract second-language learner teachers to our district. We do not have a program that would certify them, but we work very closely with the universities, as I am sure the other districts do, in letting them know of that need. It is a critical need.

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

In Carson City, as well as other districts around the State, we are trying to home grow our students. We have some very bright, capable, bi-lingual students. They are starting school at places like Western Nevada Community College (WNCC), and often times are in our classrooms as aides. That seems to

be working fairly well in many of the school districts. I know it is working well for us. I think in the long run, that has to be part of our plan because the students are there, and they can do it.

**Assemblyman Kihuen:**

Thank you for addressing that. I also want to commend you for bringing 17 superintendents to come to an agreement. I love this plan. Everything I have been reading is excellent so far.

**Assemblyman Stewart:**

I would like a clarification on full-day kindergarten. Is the \$158 million on top of what is already in place? We have \$0 for facilities in 2009. Do we not expect an increase in students? Will we not have a need to increase in facilities there?

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

That is the cost of the whole program, including the cost of the facilities that we anticipate.

**Assemblyman Stewart:**

Once again, we have \$0 on the 2009 budget. With the increase in students every year in Clark County, and to a lesser degree Washoe County, if we are going to keep the 25 students per kindergarten class, are we going to have to have more facilities again in 2009?

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

This includes our projection for students and for facilities with the growth factor.

**Assemblyman Stewart:**

That will be taken care of in 2008?

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

That is correct.

**Chair Parnell:**

I would remind the Committee to not hesitate to ask any questions at all. I want you to feel comfortable with the information that is presented not only today, but also with the A.C.R. 10 of the 73rd Session presentation on Wednesday [February 14], and the Quality Counts report next week. This is your time to delve into the issues, ask, and clarify, so we can move on and feel like we are all on the same page.

**Dr. Mary Pierczynski:**

We would like to close by saying iNVEST is a long-range plan. We have never come and said that it had to be funded in one session. I would like to add that if it were, it would be an additional \$1,200 per student in the State of Nevada. We appreciate what the Legislature has done. There are several tenets of iNVEST that the Legislature has paid attention to. We appreciate that support.

**Judge John Mendoza, Las Vegas Latin Chamber of Commerce:**

We became involved in the educational process when we were dealing with the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. We were noticing a high dropout rate before any of the students got to the university. We then began to examine the statistics as to why Latinos and other ELL students were taking advantage of a college education. We found out there were a number of very glaring errors. We also were aware of the fact that there were various programs by the State Legislature that were dealing with funding. Yet, it did not seem to be making that much of an impression. The amounts of money being involved generally did not seem to be adequate to be able to educate our children. We then began to take a look at the statistics, and we are last in everything. That means one thing: our citizens of whatever nationality who are here are being deprived of an opportunity to become meaningful, tax-paying professionals if they so desire by a system that apparently has been blindfolded in the past as to the need. I say that because when you take a look at the number of children who are ELL, 75 percent are American citizens. There seems to be a feeling that the illegal immigrants are the ones causing this. These people are not illegal—they are American citizens who are not being educated. That, of course, alarmed our group. We then proceeded to take a look at the university system. We met with Jim Rogers, Nevada System of Higher Education's (NSHE) Chancellor, and received some commitments from him and the Board of Regents, to look at this problem from their point of view. They began cooperating with the superintendents, both here and around the State. Our committee has met with every president of every university in the State of Nevada. We have put forth these issues to them. Everybody has said that whether we educate our children depends on what the Legislature does. Clearly, that was never the intent of the Legislature or the founders of the *Nevada Constitution*. I went back and read it, and the documents clearly show that the then-commencing Legislature, before we became a State, said that we had to take a look at what the role of the teacher is, what the role of the parent is, and what the role of the child is in the system.

We began to compare the laws now as to what the original intent was. We found that they have been modified. Children are not being marked truant, and we then begin to see the high dropout rate. People say they are out there to make money, but they are not. They are out there because they are

discouraged in that they are not being taught English. It is the demand that the child understand the teacher rather than the teacher understand the child. We have addressed this issue to the people at the schools of education in this State. They gradually are beginning to see that a foreign language, particularly Spanish, should be taken in the schools of education. My stepdaughter is a trained teacher in ELL. She tells me that in the system there is no desire, no push, or no effort to make certain that these children are taught appropriately. Until we begin to change that focus, we are going to continue to have this problem, and we are going to continue to be last. We have found that the university systems have really looked at this issue and are doing a remarkable job of trying to address it.

We only hope that this Committee remembers that unless you have full-time kindergarten, you are not going to have these people staying in school. You are going to continue to have the dropout rate. I was an ELL student 74 years ago when I attended Westside School in Las Vegas, Nevada. I was always in the "C" section, which means the one who cannot keep up with the other students because in my household my grandmother raised me when my mother died, and during that period of time I never spoke English at home. I had a problem until I was in the 7th or 8th grade when one teacher finally took an interest in finding out what my problem was. It was that I could not read and had not been appropriately taught to read for at least seven years in that educational system. From a personal point of view, I wanted to let you know why I feel so intensely about it. I know that you are all interested in this. There are children out there who are going to be the future voters, citizens, and parents.

**Chair Parnell:**

I want to make sure that everyone in the audience and everyone in Las Vegas understands that what we had today was a presentation. There will be no action taken on the iNVEST program today. Most of it, as a matter of fact, will not be voted on in this Committee; it will go to Ways and Means and Senate Finance. The purpose today was to get the information from the iNVEST document. If anyone has a statement to make in support or in opposition, you are welcome to. This is more of a statement today, not a debate back and forth. This is just a preface so you can be aware of what we are planning on doing with the rest of our meeting.

**Dr. Rene Cantu, Board Member of Las Vegas Latin Chamber of Commerce,  
Education Committee Member, Nevada State College Faculty:**

Judge Mendoza and I are here to express our support of the iNVEST program, especially to support the part of the iNVEST program that deals with ELL education. We were very interested in looking to you to fully fund the \$93.7 million for expanding ELL to serve our students. We have been looking at

a number of things that we found very alarming. If I may, let me cite the fact that 50 percent of Hispanic males and 50 percent of Hispanic females ages 18-24 in Clark County do not have high school diplomas. We have gone from under 20,000 Hispanic students in 1990 to 117,496 Hispanic students in Clark County School District today. Currently, despite the fact that Hispanics represent 41 percent of the dropouts from Clark County, only 27 percent of the high school seniors who graduate are Hispanic. The Judge cited the ELL statistic that 75 percent are American citizens. We urge you to support the ELL program. We want to make sure that Hispanic students are not forgotten—that the Hispanic voice be heard in Carson City, especially from the south. I want to let you know that we support you as you try to improve education for all students in Nevada.

**Joe Enge, Education Policy Analyst, Nevada Policy Research Institute (NPRI);  
Chairman, Education Watch Nevada:**

I have some serious qualms regarding the iNVEST '07 plan. Among them are some major assumptions. On page 3 ([Exhibit E](#)) it directly connects iNVEST with the A.C.R. 10 of the 73rd Session Adequacy Study, which I testified against last August with Dr. Richard Phelps. Dr. Richard Phelps did an in-depth analysis of the A.C.R. 10 Study, which brought forth some fatally flawed elements and assumptions. Therefore, the figures cannot be trusted. I am a little concerned about what Ms. Moulton mentioned regarding proof the money was well-spent. On page 3 she is citing the AYP figures from NCLB, which admittedly are cited by most school districts and superintendents as arbitrary and unfair. I tend to agree with that. I find it questionable to cite those figures as proof that suddenly this investment has paid off. If we are going to look at some objective measures, why do we not look at the ACT scores? Why do we not take a look at the SAT scores? Why do we not take a look at the college remediation rates? By my understanding, they have not improved over the course of time, even though we have increased investment in education.

I have written extensively and testified about all-day kindergarten. I believe I have some work on the NPRI website at [www.npri.org](http://www.npri.org). I also heard mentioned some interest in CTE programs. There is a great study, definitive in my opinion, on CTE by Dr. Robert Schmidt, which was completed on behalf of NPRI. I would urge this Committee to read it.

There are a number of concerns with all-day kindergarten in this iNVEST '07 plan. I find it intellectually dishonest on page 17 ([Exhibit E](#)). It implies that it is a given that all-day kindergarten is the end-all and be-all for improving academic achievement for students. That is an extremely questionable assumption. There are a number of studies that show fade-out. Some studies show that by first grade the achievements gained are lost, some



studies show by the third, and some show by fifth grade that there is nothing. When we are investing \$186 million, we really need to have honest information and be able to see all the data that is out there.

You will see the list of some of the studies ([Exhibit F](#)). One of the most definitive studies was done by the United States Department of Education (USDE), Early Childhood Longitudinal Study. They utilized 22,000 children at kindergarten entry. The Goldwater Institute cited that study. It showed there were some marginal gains in the short-term, but by the time those students had reached third grade, those gains had completely disappeared as compared to students who attended only half-day kindergarten.

I only attended half-day kindergarten. I do not know if I could have been more successful, or if any of you could have done the same. My daughter did not attend kindergarten. I have a daughter in sixth grade and a son in first who attended kindergarten last year. My daughter went to school overseas, where you do not start school until age seven. She is doing quite well. My son did half-day last year, and he is doing quite well. Obviously, that is anecdotal; hence, I do not believe in using anecdotal information. That is why I like data.

We have a Kansas report. We are not the first State who has had to wrestle with this issue. Kansas has wrestled with it as well. Their experts with their State Department of Education came back and said it is pretty mixed. There are not definitive studies that show it is worth the investment. Massachusetts School District reported to parents saying that, "Empirical evidence of all-day, half-day, and alternative-day programs suggest that there are no clear, differential effects of kindergarten schedules on both academic achievement and classroom social behaviors, therefore, Medway (this is the school district) can consider financial, philosophical, and other factors in deciding kindergarten schedules." If we want to implement something like this for social reasons, I am fine with that, if that is where the debate is going to go. But if we are going to go upon academic achievement, there are some serious problems with that.

The Rand Corporation did a study, which showed, once again, fade-out. The advantages disappeared. But what is interesting is the Rand Study actually showed some negative behaviors, particularly among boys. I do not know why we develop a little slower, but sometimes it is hard for boys to sit in the classroom all day at that age level. They actually found some negative social behaviors and even some negative outcomes in math. They really did not know why, and they need to study it more and in-depth. I am not saying it is definitive, but there is the possibility we could have negative outcomes.

Also, it was mentioned that "our studies showed," with "our" meaning a Clark County study. There is a problem with school districts doing their own studies. They need to bring in somebody objective, an outside person to do these types of studies to be taken seriously and credibly. There are also developmental issues. There is only so much you can give a child before it is overkill. I have heard it likened to a medical dosage.

Also, the historical expansion of preschool and early childhood education over the last 30-40 years has not brought about any increased academic achievement. Our students do quite well in the fourth grade in international comparisons. They do not do so well in middle school, and they do atrociously in high school. The problem area is not in kindergarten. It does not bring with it the benefits from funding. By focusing on this area, we are not focusing on areas that are far more important and relevant to achievement for students.

**Donna Hoffman-Anspach, President, Nevadans for Quality Education (NQE):**  
[Spoke from prepared text, ([Exhibit G](#)).]

**Terry Hickman, Executive Director, Nevada State Education Association:**

I have given to you a written statement ([Exhibit H](#)). Rather than to go over it, I simply want to state that Nevada State Education Association supports the vast majority of concepts contained within the iNVest program. We see iNVest as a framework for improving student achievement. We see it as a way that clearly lights the way for our State to invest in public education. In that investment we will be able to not only help our students today, but also those of tomorrow. A well-skilled workforce is certainly an important part of everyone's job and desire in Nevada, and it is certainly one of ours. We stand ready to work with you, as the Education Committee and other legislators, as well as with the School Boards Association and Superintendents because we do want to invest in public education. We believe it is high time we do more than discuss; it is time we take the next step: investing.

**Assemblyman Segerblom:**

Mr. Hickman, does your membership support the idea of a five-day longer school year?

**Terry Hickman:**

After repeatedly speaking with our members, I believe they are very concerned. They support a longer school day, but they want to be sure that those times are time to teach. They feel that time to teach is an important ingredient that they like to see added, not just for other things to do, like more testing, et cetera.

**David Schumann, Nevada Committee for Full Statehood:**

I am here to cast a little cold water on this. The Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has examined American schools, and found and declared they are substandard ([Exhibit I](#)). Before any of us get on an airplane and fly in the air, we would like to understand that the pilot of that plane is competent. The OECD, an international organization, is an organization of economic cooperation and development. We see on page 93 that Japan spends half as much per student as America does, and they regularly beat us on the international tests in math and science. The leader, by the way, is usually Singapore, where I have worked and lived. Singapore was dragged kicking and screaming out of Third World nation status in the late 1970s. I say kicking and screaming because they got tariff benefits because of that. It is not a rich country. It is a small city-state at the bottom of the Malay Peninsula, but when I was there in the late 1970s, the children had better English vocabularies and better grammar. They could define nouns and conjugate verbs, and they could read complex shipping documents and contracts.

We need a basic reworking of the system here toward such things as teacher education. The current people who teach go to schools of education. In California, 39 percent of the top one-eighth of the high school graduates had to take remediation at the university level. A friend, Laura Head, Professor of Black Studies, said at San Francisco State they had to teach a course to entering freshmen on how to write a sentence. You are a little old at age 19 or 20 to learn how to write a sentence. You want to learn English? Robert Rossier has told us how to do that. We had this conversation ten years ago. It is English immersion. For English as a second language and ELL learners, children in their teens and below have much better ability than any of us in this room to learn a language.

English immersion it is the way the people in the 1890s and 1900s learned English. They were thrown over here without any courses, and if you were somebody over age 20, tough luck. If you were a teen or below, you quickly mastered English.

Milton Freedman has a famous comment on this whole thing. There was an inverse relationship between the amount of money the State spends on education and the academic results achieved thereby. You can see that on the chart. Japan is near the bottom in spending money, and they get much better results. He was speaking specifically of some of the Midwestern States. They regularly trump Connecticut, for example.

**Chair Parnell:**

Mr. Schumann, could you direct your comments to the iNVEST presentation so we can follow you?

**David Schumann:**

Yes. The iNVEST presentation talks about spending money in things that sound nice, but when you look at them there is no real depth there. They want to spend money on full-day kindergarten. There is absolutely zero evidence to support the notion that that makes you a better high school student. None. Zero. In fact, they recently did this study that Joe Enge talked about in Arizona, and they came to the conclusion that it fades out by the third grade. Full-day kindergarten does not help anyone. Most of us over age 40 or 50 had half-day kindergarten.

iNVEST wants to do a full-day kindergarten. That is a bad use of a young person's time. They should be at home with their parents being intellectually challenged and molded by their parents, not by some third-party kindergarten teacher who may or may not have done a great job in teacher's college.

The money they want to spend on books is fine and dandy, but let us get some competitive pricing on them. I have read some of these books. Their history books have only a small amount on Benjamin Franklin. There is a book called *America Will Be*. It is supposedly a high school American history text. Somebody outside the system needs to look through these books and see if we should really be using these books to instruct children. I do not think so. The notion that we need this whole program is not true.

Hire teachers who are competent in math, science, and English, and who can teach grammar and pre-Civil War American history. I think it is critical. I was shocked to learn they do not teach pre-Civil War American History anymore. When did that come to pass?

**Chair Parnell:**

I have to correct you on that because that is one of the things I taught. Let us make sure that we know what we are talking about before we make statements like that. I believe Mr. Munford did, and I believe Mr. Stewart did as well.

**David Schumann:**

That is how Mr. Enge relates it: they are not teaching pre-Civil War history. I certainly was taught that in school. I do not think the solutions should come from either the teacher's union or the teacher's administrators. When it can be said by a group that is not in this fight that we have substandard schools, not

just in Nevada but in America, it is much bigger than what was discussed in iNVest.

**Rick Wendling, Carson City Seniors Small Business Persons Coalition:**

I was going to speak briefly to the presentation, but I changed my mind. I do not know if Mr. Schumann has a reputation here or if the Nevada State Education Association has a reputation here. This is the first time I have been to one of these. But I have been looking at your faces when these people were talking, and I am somewhat saddened to see that there was not rapt attention to what Mr. Schumann was saying. You may disagree, but a lot of our education problems are caused by the fact that our immigration standards have been severely reduced. We have large influxes of people who do not speak English, and because of their family culture, they do not speak English at home.

If they do not speak English at home, and we are encouraging them to only speak English as a second language, then here is what we businessmen get from our education system ([Exhibit J](#)). We get young adults who cannot read, who cannot speak, who cannot write, and who cannot add and subtract unless they have a computer-driven cash register.

I am in business. I do not have employees because I cannot retrain people in all of these skills. If you work with me, you have to be able to almost step onto the street and be running. We are here to help you because our profits are what generate the revenues that provide the teacher's union and the teachers with the money. If we cannot be generating good profits and have to compete with foreign nations under our "dear President's" trade reductions and barriers, and we have labor cuts across the ocean that are \$1 or \$2 per day, we have the impetus to have people here who are willing to work for \$10 an hour. I know we do not get good workers for \$10 an hour.

I am saying that our education system is not really doing the job. We need you to get more bang for the buck. I do not think that all of the requirements that the superintendents have requested are going to do it. I look forward to coming back and talking in details about some of the things that are in your program.

**Peggy Lear Bowen, Concerned Citizen, Washoe County:**

I am a teacher. This is my 34th year. I work for Washoe County School District, and I am a retired member of the Nevada State Board of Education, but I need you to know that I speak for myself. There are two issues I wanted to address that came up during your presentation. One is the one-fifth credit for an incentive for people to work in the at-risk schools or in the high-need area of certain classes.

I need to declare that I am a recipient of the one-fifth. I have received four such credits for four years teaching at an at-risk school since the initiation of this program. I appreciate that program being in place, but if one of the purposes is to attract and keep our new, young teachers, you need to be aware that unless you are vested in the Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), you do not receive the one-fifth. It comes across, using my own words, as a hollow promise. Maybe if you would work in areas where you could bank the one-fifth before you were vested, if I worked for 5 years and then became vested (it takes 5 years to become vested), then I could retroactively receive the one-fifth that I had already earned in that place. The PERS rules right now do not allow anyone, including counties, districts, et cetera, to purchase for those who are not yet vested. It is a good reward, and it is greatly appreciated, but it is lost on our young teachers because they cannot earn it, and they cannot go back and get it right now. Other incentives or a banking system might be a suggestion to think about for the one-fifth of retirement. It does make a difference.

Years ago the Nevada State Board of Education and Nevada State Board of Occupational Education did an in-depth study of, worked for, held meetings of, and held conferences about the Six by Six initiative that we had within the Nevada State Board of Education. A great deal of good information was garnered at that point that could be applicable to your iNVest concept of the day-long kindergarten.

The bottom line on your day-long kindergarten or a mandated half-day kindergarten is that with such mandates come class size and transportation mandates. When I was a member of the State Board of Education, we often heard that the reason we did not have full-day kindergarten, or that we did not have mandated half-day kindergarten for all the kindergarten students within our State, was for lack of a bus ride and wanting to pay for it. The bottom line is that you either bring your child to kindergarten in the morning, or you pick them up at noon. There is no noontime bus ride. That lack of transportation and the lack of a mandate allows the classes of 42 or more students their first step into a classroom, unless they were involved in preschool. Their first step into our public school system is with very hard-working kindergarten teachers working in horrible conditions in the sense of numbers of bodies, and trying to initiate a positive situation for these children to respond to. Their first step in school sets an attitude that can last a lifetime. In your discussions, and with your other committees, please keep in mind that the goal is to make the entry into our public school system fantastic for these children. The work has already been done by the State Board. Really make school the beginning of the intellectual career for what they want to do and where they want to go to make their dreams be the most fantastic that you can.

**Robert Crowell, Concerned Citizen, Carson City, Nevada:**

I am at the hearing today as an individual, although I am an elected member of the Carson City School Board, chairman of the Carson City Chamber of Commerce, and a paid lobbyist. I want you to know that I am not speaking on behalf on any of those entities; I am speaking on behalf of myself as a native Nevadan, a product of Carson City and Tonopah School Districts, and a longtime member of Carson City School Board. I wanted to make two points. One was to address a comment that Dr. Hardy made about NCLB, and the other is a quick comment about all-day kindergarten.

Dr. Hardy made a very prescient comment about whether or not all-day kindergarten and NCLB had a political overtone, and whether there is anything good about it. As a school board member, I originally believed that the NCLB law was probably a waste of time and a wrong approach to both education and management. That being said, the NCLB law and its implementation has done some things that I do not think we would have done but for NCLB. One of those things is accountability and standards. We have done accountability and standards in Carson City for some time, but NCLB has required us to focus on those standards and those accountability requirements for our kids to meet those standards. The NCLB law has also taught us to look at how our various subpopulations are meeting those standards.

I have heard a lot hear today about English as a second language and ELL, and the standards of NCLB have told me that in Carson City we do have a problem. We need to focus on those individuals, and we need to focus on how we educate them. Without that, I am sure we would have drilled down to that level of detail and found it out, but I am here to tell you that despite what I might have thought about NCLB, I think it has forced our school district to do things that we might not have done earlier. Listen to what everybody has to say, take the good parts and move on. As for the parts that you do not agree with, keep an open mind because there is always a better way to educate. Life is an education process.

I heard the comment that maybe some of the school boards are intellectually dishonest in voting for iNVest '07. I voted for iNVests '03, '05, and '07, and I do not know if I am intellectually challenged, but I do not think I am intellectually dishonest. I will tell you that I listened to the State of the State address very carefully, and I am very impressed with our Governor talking about the importance of education in our community and our State, and what it means to our country. I had an inquiring mind about his term "empowerment." For that reason, I met with Dr. Pierczynski and Mr. Strembitski, the Canadian principal from Edmonton, the next day to find out what empowerment is. Is it something we want to do in Carson City? What are the ramifications? Without

any partisan overtones whatsoever, let us take a look at it. In the course of that conversation, I asked Mr. Strembitski, "Is all-day kindergarten a good thing or a bad thing for education?" His first comment was, "There is a lot of politics associated with all-day kindergarten, and there is a lot of money associated with all-day kindergarten." I said, "Take politics and money off the table. Just tell me whether you think that all-day kindergarten is a valuable educational tool." The answer from Mr. Strembitski was, "Absolutely."

**Chair Parnell:**

When we talk about the politics of NCLB, we have to remember that it was a collaborative effort between President Bush and Senator Kennedy, so it is not partisan.

**Barbara Myers, Member, State Board of Education, representing Carson City, Douglas County, and half of Washoe County:**

I have been teaching for 35 years. I am a speech language pathologist for Lyon County schools. I am here today to say to you that the State Board of Education also unanimously supported the tenets of iNVEST '07. We did in '05 and in '03. We do support this, and we see it as a building block and a way to move forward. No one is asking for everything all at once, but there has to be a base and a way to pyramid up. I, like you, am amazed that 17 superintendents and 17 local school boards have agreed to come together. You have a State Board of Education, consisting of ten of who represent the whole State and probably are elected by more people than any of you, given our constituency size. While we may not agree in how we get there, we all agree that it is something that has to be done. While I have the opportunity, I want to personally thank Bonnie Parnell for holding these meetings at 3:45 p.m. because it allows teachers to come from school, which I did today, and speak to you as teachers.

**Chair Parnell:**

Thank you for your comments. It is very important for the members of this Committee to know that the State Board of Education signed onto this document as well.

Regarding Dr. Hardy's question about the partisanship on some of these issues, I wonder why the political tinge on so many education issues came to be. When you look at this document and consider the 17 counties, both urban and rural, the school board members, and the superintendents, this is not a partisan document. You have Republicans, Democrats, Libertarians, Independents, and every single other political affiliation represented by the people who cast a vote on this document. It is extremely important to know that this is not partisan.



We try to make so much partisan, and I think it is important to note, at times, what is and what is not.

**Alison Turner, Legislative Liaison, Nevada Parent Teacher Association (PTA):**

I have been a parent in Nevada schools for nine years. While parent involvement is always a vital part of any of our efforts, the Nevada PTA has three top concerns during this session. Full-day kindergarten shows progress for all students: those who enter the program below standards, approaching them, achieving the standards, or exceeding them. These results were obtained by our children in our schools in Nevada. There really is academic curriculum in kindergarten.

Secondly, adequate school funding is clearly another priority. Adequate basic support with additional funding for additional services needed by a child makes sense. ELL and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) children need more services, and schools need to be funded to pay for them. Thirdly, student safety and welfare is also important. Classroom and traffic safety are, for all of our children, vital necessities. We have a duty to protect their lives and health.

Finally, as the Legislature looks at education needs across Nevada, it is understandable that everyone wants to find one program to fund one time to fix education. Unfortunately there is no "magic bullet." It is a long, hard slog. It does not end with full-day kindergarten. Our second graders are working on basic algebra. There are, however, research-based proven programs that can be used together to address student needs. The empowerment schools concept is being tested in Clark County to see how it meets the needs of our children in our schools in Nevada. We have some unique challenges in Nevada: tremendous growth, multiple languages, and transience chief among them. For example, in Clark County for every ten children at the beginning of the school year, a teacher can realistically expect to have four of them remain in the classroom by the end of the year.

Thank you for all of your hard work on behalf of all of the children of Nevada.

**Chair Parnell:**

Thank you. Are there additional persons wanting to testify before this Committee? [There were none.] [Meeting adjourned 6:07 p.m.]

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

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Kelly Troescher  
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

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Assemblywoman Bonnie Parnell, Chair

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## EXHIBITS

**Committee Name:** Committee on Education

**Date:** February 12, 2007

**Time of Meeting:** 3:45 p.m.

<b>Bill</b>	<b>Exhibit</b>	<b>Witness / Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>
	A	Committee on Education	Agenda, February 12
	B	Committee on Education	Attendance Roster
	C	Sheila Moulton, President, Nevada Association of School Boards	Prepared Text
	D	Sheila Moulton, President, Nevada Association of School Boards	iNVEST '07 Power Point Presentation
	E	Sheila Moulton, President, Nevada Association of School Boards	iNVEST '07 packet
	F	Joe Enge, Nevada Policy Research Institute	ABCs of All-Day K
	G	Donna Hoffman-Anspach, President, Nevadans for Quality Education	Prepared Text
	H	Terry Hickman, Executive Director, Nevada State Education Association	Memorandum
	I	David Schumann, Nevada Committee for Full Statehood	OECD Economic Survey
	J	Rick Wendling, Carson City Seniors Small Business People and Persons Coalition	Eighth-grade final exam from Salina, Kansas