

**MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING
OF THE
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
AND THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**Seventy-Seventh Session
February 27, 2013**

The Joint Assembly Committee on Education and the Senate Committee on Education was called to order by Chairman Elliot T. Anderson at 3:31 p.m. on Wednesday, February 27, 2013, in Room 1214 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 nelis.leg.state.nv.us/77th2013. In addition, copies of the audio record may be purchased through the Legislative Counsel Bureau's Publications Office (email: publications@lcb.state.nv.us; telephone: 775-684-6835).

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Assemblyman Elliot T. Anderson, Chairman
Assemblywoman Marilyn Dondero Loop, Vice Chairwoman
Assemblyman Paul Aizley
Assemblywoman Lesley E. Cohen
Assemblywoman Olivia Diaz
Assemblyman Wesley Duncan
Assemblyman Andy Eisen
Assemblywoman Michele Fiore
Assemblyman Randy Kirner
Assemblyman Harvey J. Munford
Assemblywoman Dina Neal
Assemblyman Lynn D. Stewart
Assemblywoman Heidi Swank
Assemblywoman Melissa Woodbury



SENATE COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Joyce Woodhouse, Chairman
Senator Aaron D. Ford, Vice Chairman
Senator Ruben J. Kihuen
Senator Barbara K. Cegavske
Senator Donald G. Gustavson

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Marilyn Kirkpatrick, Clark County Assembly
District No. 1
Senator Debbie Smith, Washoe County Senate District No. 13

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Todd Butterworth, Committee Policy Analyst
Pepper Sturm, Senate Chief Deputy Research Director
Andrew Diss, Committee Manager
Jacque Lethbridge, Committee Secretary
Sharon McCallen, Committee Secretary
Steven Sisneros, Committee Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT:

Dr. Jane McCarthy, Lincy Professor of Education, Department of
Teaching and Learning, College of Education, University of Nevada,
Las Vegas
Scott Loe, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Educational
Psychology and Higher Education, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Lindsay Anderson, representing Washoe County School District
Ailene Azzam, Private Citizen, Washoe County, Nevada
Vicenta Montoya, representing Si Se Puede Latino Democratic Caucus,
Las Vegas, Nevada
Ellen Holmes, representing Clark County Education Association
Dotty Merrill, representing Nevada Association of School Boards
Lonnie Shields, representing Nevada Association of School Administrators

Stephen Augspurger, representing Clark County Association of School Administrators
Dale Norton, Superintendent, Nye County School District
Miranda Jones, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Pat Skorkowsky, Deputy Superintendent, Instruction Unit, Clark County School District
Craig M. Stevens, representing Nevada State Education Association
Laura Porreca, Private Citizen, Henderson, Nevada
Fernando Romero, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Robin Vircsik, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
John Ellsworth, representing Parent Leaders for Education, Reno, Nevada
Ignacio Prado, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Joyce Haldeman, representing Clark County School District
Ryan Korn, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
David Blodgett, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Natha Anderson, Private Citizen, Washoe County, Nevada
Marlene Lockard, representing Nevada Women's Lobby, Reno, Nevada
Jeremy Parnes, Private Citizen, Clark County, Nevada
Nathan Warner, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Leticia Shaffer, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Janet Merkle, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Adam Berger, Private Citizen, Henderson, Nevada
Gonzalo Cisneros, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Angie Sullivan, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada

Chairman Elliot Anderson:

[Roll was called. Committee protocol and procedure was given. Rule 54 of the Assembly Standing Rules governing support, opposition, and neutral on bills was explained.]

My goal is to spend no more than 90 minutes on each bill. If a great number of people sign in, we will need to take steps to ensure that everyone has their voice heard. We will observe standard procedure as we go forth. Bill sponsors will have the ability for their witnesses to go first. After that, we will hear everyone from Carson City in support, everyone in Las Vegas in support, then do the same for the opposition and neutral positions. Additionally, please pay attention. Saying "Ditto," and "Me, too," is encouraged to prevent repeated testimony. If testimony begins to run long, we will limit the time to one or two minutes. If you have written testimony, feel free to submit that in lieu of speaking. We will make sure it is part of the record. If we run out of time for testimony, you will have 48 hours to submit that information to the committee manager, Andrew Diss.

[The Meeting was turned over to Assembly Vice Chairwoman, Marilyn Dondero Loop.]

Vice Chairwoman Dondero Loop:

We will begin testimony on Assembly Bill 161.

Assembly Bill 161: Revises provisions governing the advancement of certain pupils to higher grade levels. (BDR 34-722)

Assemblyman Elliot T. Anderson, Clark County Assembly District No. 15:

I am happy to be here to present Assembly Bill 161. I am sure everyone knows what this bill does, it is the read by three legislation. We will begin with "Why Read By Three?"

[Assemblyman Anderson gave a slide presentation ([Exhibit C](#)).]

Donald Hernandez's report, "Double Jeopardy" ([Exhibit D](#)), finds that third graders who have lived in poverty and are not reading at grade level will fail to finish high school by age 19 at a rate 6 times higher than the rate for proficient third-grade readers.

According to the Nevada Department of Corrections 85 percent of all juveniles who interface with the juvenile court system are functionally illiterate.

The purpose of A.B. 161, making students repeat third grade, is to identify students likely to need help as early as prekindergarten, providing focused intervention, and when necessary, holding a student back before fourth grade to give all students the tools they need to succeed and eventually graduate.

The later a student is held back, the more likely they are to not complete high school. That is why early intervention by, communication with, and resources for parents is essential.

Retention with resources works. Studies of Florida's third-grade retention policy found that retained third graders made significant gains compared to socially promoted students. These gains actually grew substantially from the first to the second year after retention.

Students who are socially promoted appear to fall further behind over time, while retained third graders are able to catch up and succeed in later grades. Retention policies have had the greatest impact on minority student learning.

At the same time, Florida implemented universal prekindergarten and increased per-student expenditure significantly.

With regard to "Florida's 4th Grade National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Reading Achievement--1998 and 2009," you can see, at all levels of basic or better, proficient or better, or advanced, Florida improved its numbers. To clarify, there was voter-approved, universal prekindergarten policy put into effect; a budget that increased from \$21 billion to \$45 billion; and reduced class size funded at lower levels. Florida did not make a statutory requirement for class-size reduction. They also spent the money there, as well as mandating 90 minutes of instructional reading time during this period.

There is general agreement on "Why Read by Grade Three," so I will move on to key sections of the bill. Section 5, subsection 1, regarding preretention notice to parents, exists to give parents a great deal of notice before their student is held back in third grade. It requires the principal of a student to be held back to send written notice to a parent if the student does not achieve proficiency in reading based upon evaluations or observations of a teacher in kindergarten, first grade, second grade, and third grade. We do have an existing retention policy that applies to the other grades. We would require a notice before a student is held back in any of those grades.

The notice required by this subsection must include: identification of educational programs the student will receive through the educational system; a clear notice that the student will not be promoted to fourth grade without achieving a passing score on the third grade reading assessments; a clear explanation of factors that will cause a student to be retained, including a potential good-cause exemption to the retention policy; a description of home-based strategies parents can use to help the student and other community programs and services available to help improve the student's proficiency; and an explanation of the criteria adopted by the local school district of the student, required by section 8, subsection 4 governing a mid-school-year promotion to fourth grade, if a student is initially not promoted to fourth grade.

In section 5, subsection 2, we look at early and intensive reading instruction. I want to remind the Committee, this was very key in Florida and led to their results. This subsection ensures that students in danger of not reading proficiently by third grade are identified and receive additional support. It is no one's goal to hold students back. Once a school determines that a student enrolled in kindergarten, first grade, second grade, or third grade is not proficient in reading, it requires that student receive intensive instruction in

reading and that the student be tested at the beginning of the next school year. We want to try to solve the problem before we are holding anyone back.

In section 6, summer reading school is addressed. This section requires the local school districts and governing body of a charter school to develop a reading program that is to be operated during the summer, or between sessions, if it is a year-round school. It also requires a student who has not achieved reading proficiency, but has completed second or third grade, to enroll in the program so we ensure that we are not setting them up for failure later. It also allows a third-grade student initially retained based on failure to achieve proficiency, to take an alternative reading examination which will be described later in section 10, and allows for promotion if the student passes.

I would like to talk more about summer reading school because, again, it is part of that intense remediation and intense instruction that is needed to ensure that we are not just holding students back, but that they also get the skills they need. Studies on summer learning loss find that low-income youth regress more in reading skills over the summer than their higher-income peers ([Exhibit E](#)).

The Karl Alexander study, "Schools, Achievement, and Inequality: A Seasonal Perspective," found that nearly two-thirds of the ninth-grade academic achievement gap between economically disadvantaged and advantaged teens can be explained by summer learning loss during the elementary school years. Some have attributed this phenomenon to less time spent reading, less access to books at home, and less time spent in the library during the summer months than their middle- and high-income peers. Structured summer reading programs across the country have been proven to increase reading proficiency and increase performance in areas other than reading for students who participate.

Retention is addressed in section 7, subsection 1 and is the meat of the bill. A student enrolled in third grade must not be promoted to fourth grade unless they achieve a passing score on the Criterion-Referenced Test (CRT) reading examination. The Teachers and Leaders Council (TLC) shall determine what the passing score should be, as prescribed by section 10. The stakeholders included in determining the cut score, which is the minimum score a student can receive that defines a passing grade, are:

- Representatives of parents
- Representatives of school administrators
- Representatives of teachers
- Representatives of school superintendents
- Representatives of school board members

- Representatives of regional professional development organizations
- A designee of the state superintendent of schools
- Experts in education policy

It will allow a wide swath of the community to have a voice in this cut score, as it will potentially affect parents, teachers, and children.

In section 7, subsection 2, the “Good Cause Exemption,” which I referenced previously, creates six criteria for a student to be promoted to fourth grade without having been found to be proficient in reading. These criteria are:

- Obtaining a passing score on an alternative examination;
- Demonstrating proficiency in reading at grade level through a portfolio of work;
- Not receiving at least two years of English Language Learner (ELL) instruction, if limited in English proficiency;
- If a student is previously retained in kindergarten, first grade, second grade or third grade, and the student still demonstrates a reading deficiency after receiving intensive remediation for two or more years;
- If the student has a disability and their individualized education program (IEP) indicates it is not appropriate for the student to participate in the reading examination, or if the test is appropriate, the program is developed pursuant to federal law, and the student has been previously retained and still demonstrates a deficiency in reading.

The last item ensures we are in compliance with federal law because if you have a child with a disability, they have an individualized plan.

Section 7, subsection 3, details procedures for granting the good-cause exemptions listed above. The good-cause exemptions described in subsection 2 must only be granted if the teacher of the student submits a written recommendation to the school principal to grant the exemption, including documentation to support the recommendation, which must only consist of any existing plan of monitoring the progress of reading for the student; any applicable IEP for the student; the student’s report card; and the student’s portfolio of work.

After receiving the recommendation and documentation from the teacher, the principal shall review the recommendation and discuss it with the teacher. If the principal decides to accept the recommendation, the principal shall submit the recommendation to the superintendent of schools for the district or the governing body of the charter school. The superintendent of schools or the

governing body of the charter school shall make the final determination and provide written notice of their decision to the parent/legal guardian of the student.

Section 8, subsection 1, discusses the postretention notice and requirements of the student's principal. The principal of a student retained in third grade shall provide notice to the parents or legal guardians that the student was retained, including a description of the intensive reading instruction that the student will receive; the principal shall develop a plan to monitor the progress of the student in achieving proficiency in reading and provide a report to the parents or legal guardians of the student each week; the principal shall develop a portfolio of the student's work, which must be updated to document progress made by the student.

The principal shall ensure that the student is provided intensive instructional services in reading and must include 90 minutes of uninterrupted reading instruction a day, which is scientifically based on reading instruction research, and intensive instructional services prescribed by the school board.

Section 8, subsections 2 through 5, details the duties of the various school boards. Boards shall review and evaluate the plan for monitoring progress of a retained student and shall prescribe intensive instructional services in reading for each retained student, who must be taught by a highly effective teacher, including: instruction provided in a small group setting; instruction provided in a class with a reduced student-teacher ratio—lower class size than the norm; a time line for monitoring progress; tutoring and mentoring; classes designed to increase the ability of the student to advance to fourth grade; and instruction provided outside of normal hours, weeks, or years.

Boards shall also develop a policy by which a principal may promote a student at any time during the school year, if the student demonstrates proficiency in reading. This policy must include specific criteria that must be satisfied, and must not allow promotion after November 1, or 60 days after the start of the school year if on a year-round calendar.

Section 8, subsection 6 details the one-year maximum retention policy that we are proposing with this bill. A student can only be retained in third grade once; the student shall be provided with transitional classes in order to help the student reach grade level; and the student shall continue to receive remediation to address their reading deficiency.

Section 9 details additional help outside of school. The principal of the student retained in third grade must offer the parents at least one additional option for reading instruction, which include teaching parents how to read at home with the student in order to facilitate at-home learning, or providing the student with a mentor or tutor who is qualified to provide instruction in reading.

Finally, section 11 requires school districts to report the number and percentage of students at each school who were retained in third grade. The reports shall be distributed to the public, including parents in the district. The reports shall be broken down by gender, social and economic status, and race and ethnicity.

Again, "Why Read by Three?" In order to hold teachers accountable for student achievement, it is imperative that students who are promoted have the basic skills that allow them to participate. Assembly Bill 161 aligns goals and resources for parents, students, teachers and school districts to ensure all students can read by third grade. According to the 2011 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), only 16 percent of fourth-grade students who qualify for free or reduced lunch are proficient in reading. For context, in Clark County the latest number of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch is 57 percent.

Senator Cegavske:

Beginning on page 23, line 33 of the Donald Hernandez report, "Double Jeopardy" ([Exhibit D](#)), the first thing that comes to my mind is that you are asking the Teachers and Leaders Council (TLC) to score the examination prescribed by them. Who is doing the assessments now?

Assemblyman Elliot Anderson:

We are talking about the existing CRT reading examinations. The TLC would only be involved in setting the cut score, or the passing score, not to hold a student back.

Senator Cegavske:

As the Teachers and Leaders Council is mentioned several times throughout this legislation, are we giving them new authority or proposing new requirements for the students in this area of proposed language? That is what came to my mind while reading the report.

Assemblyman Elliot Anderson:

We have existing Criterion-Referenced Tests (CRT) in *Nevada Revised Statutes* 389.550, page 23, lines 22 and 23. The TLC would only be involved in

determining what the passing score is to avoid being retained at the end of third grade if a student is not proficient.

Senator Cegavske:

I want to thank you for putting the portfolio requirement into A.B. 161. That is something we have talked about for many years. We use it for students who have special needs, and the programs we use for them such as the Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The portfolio is very important not only for the parents and the teachers, but for whomever else may look.

Assemblyman Stewart:

Page 24, line 43 of A.B. 161, regarding the superintendent of schools having to approve the recommendations of the principal, if we amend to "or his designee" — in Eureka it might not pose a problem, but it could be a problem in Clark County if the superintendent had to approve each one of these exceptions.

Assemblyman Elliot Anderson:

In general, the idea of having the superintendent of schools involved is to ensure accountability and that we are not giving good-cause exemptions indiscriminately. It is important to make sure students can read. I am open to considering a change in consultation with the districts if that is a potential problem. I would look for some guidance from Clark County.

Assemblyman Stewart:

I heard you say that the students would have 90 minutes of uninterrupted reading instruction, is that correct?

Assemblyman Elliot Anderson:

That is postretention. It would be better if every student in Nevada, grades kindergarten through third, could have 90 uninterrupted minutes, guaranteed. This bill mandates remediation after retention. However, based on Florida's policy that 90 minutes of intensive reading instruction before it was needed to remediate, proved to be very effective. After we have held a student back, the idea is to ensure they have that opportunity. It has been proven to help children get back on track for reading.

Assemblyman Stewart:

I would recommend you eliminate the word "uninterrupted" because having a student sit there for 90 minutes of reading instruction would probably prove difficult.

Assemblywoman Diaz:

I would like to clarify in section 8, subsection 6, where it says we can only retain a child in third grade once. I want to make sure this is permissive to retain the child any time before third grade. I am concerned that third grade might not be the appropriate grade at which to do the retention. Sometimes they benefit more from the second- or first-grade retention.

Assemblyman Elliot Anderson:

There is already existing statute that deals with retention. If they need to be held prior to third grade, the teacher and the principal have to agree. This would in no way prohibit the retention of a student prior to third grade from happening. Earlier in the bill, we talk about notice. If it is based on reading, or observations of the teacher, give that notice early on so the parents can get started earlier in helping their child to be ready before he or she could be held back again in third grade. There are additional requirements if a child is held back prior to third grade, but nothing in this bill would prohibit that from occurring.

Assemblywoman Fiore:

On page 23, lines 38 through 40, it allows promotion if a child's primary language is not English. Should not language be included for English Immersion so the child may be taught in English to be able to pass the test?

Assemblyman Elliot Anderson:

The intent of this bill is not to determine what language instruction a child gets. My belief is it is unfair to require someone to read if we have not given them the resources to have that instruction and receive the proper training, whatever that proper training is. This bill does not seek, in any way, to determine what ELL training they are to get. This bill just says if they have not gotten something, we are not going to hold them back.

Assemblyman Kirner:

As you know I have a bill that is virtually a duplicate, but with a few exceptions. There is a great opportunity to combine two bills. I did not see in your bill where you talk about additional resources that might be assigned to a school, such as a reading literacy expert.

Vice Chairwoman Dondero Loop:

This is a policy committee, not finance.

Assemblyman Kirner:

I am talking policy. The policy is, are we going to add extra resources? That is what I am asking. I am not asking what it would cost.

Vice Chairwoman Dondero Loop:

I am just reminding you. We are discussing the policy of the bill, not the finance, and I know that is a fine line in many of our committees.

Assemblyman Kirner:

Also, I did not see professional development in the bill. Is there a consideration for that?

Assemblyman Elliot Anderson:

Professional development will be a big topic this session. It is not specifically provided for in this bill as I am anticipating other bills to come before the Committee. The interim committee has sent at least one professional development bill. Whenever we are requiring something from our teachers and educational personnel, we need to be there with the resources to ensure that they have all of the tools they need. I do not think it fits into this bill correctly, but I do agree that professional development needs to be considered with any mandate we are giving our school districts.

Assemblyman Kirner:

Is there a process for parents to appeal the decision to retain?

Assemblyman Elliot Anderson:

That is not explicitly provided for in A.B. 161. However, I would tell you that the TLC does have parent representatives, and they have the duty to determine what the passing, or cut, score is. The parents can certainly make their case to the school board as procedure for the good-cause exemptions. It is cut and dried and if they have met the score, then they are not retained. If they have not met the score then they are retained unless they qualify for a good-cause exemption.

Assemblyman Kirner:

Is that score broken down into different components such as fluency or phonetics?

Assemblyman Elliot Anderson:

It is not explicitly broken down to exactly how the instruction may be. I do not think it would be a good idea to write into statute explicitly how we break down

the score. Whenever we write things into statute and they do not work out, we are not able to come back and fix them. It is better left to the professionals.

Assemblywoman Swank:

With regard to the preretention notice in section 5, it might be helpful to state that the notice would be written in a language that is well represented in the schools, such as Spanish. I am concerned that students may have parents who are not English speakers. We want to ensure that these notices are understood by the parents. At this point, after the parents have received the written notice containing all of the information, there could be a face-to-face meeting to engage the parents.

Assemblyman Elliot Anderson:

There is an attempt to get the parents more involved. It is in the postretention notice that there needs to be weekly communication between the parent and the teacher if possible. I will get back to you with more specific information.

Assemblyman Duncan:

I really appreciate this bill and I think there are a lot of lessons we can learn from Florida. The demographics of their students are very similar to ours. With that in mind, I was curious about the exemptions. How do our exemptions model Florida's exemptions? Also, do you know if Florida prevents grade advancement at any level before third grade?

Assemblyman Elliot Anderson:

I do know that Florida uses portfolios. There was discussion previous to the hearing regarding portfolios. Our state already uses portfolios and that is also important to this bill. Previous versions of this bill discussed social promotion policy and there is some similarity. I have not read through all of Florida's statutes on this subject, so I do not know about the other exemptions. What I do know is based on studies I have read.

Assemblyman Duncan:

Assemblywoman Diaz asked whether or not Florida actually prevents advancement prior to third grade.

Assemblyman Elliot Anderson:

I do not know the answer to that question. I cannot imagine they would write a statute that would prohibit earlier retention, because it is important to get students up to speed as soon as possible. There is wide agreement about that from what I have read in the literature regarding this kind of policy. I would be very surprised if they did not allow retention at an earlier grade level.

Assemblywoman Woodbury:

With regard to uninterrupted reading instruction, it does not specify whether that should be one-on-one, small group, or whole group. Is there an intention with that issue? Who would make that decision?

Assemblyman Elliot Anderson:

We do require reduced class-size ratios after postretention. We do not explicitly state that the reading instruction has to be one-on-one; we do provide other options for mentoring or tutoring in the bill. I have never heard of a mentor or tutor in a group setting. In terms of the actual reading instruction, it provides 90 minutes by the school district and is supposed to be provided in a reduced class-size ratio, but it is not explicitly mandated in the statute that instruction be one-on-one.

Assemblywoman Woodbury:

Would this take place after they are already placed in a reduced-size classroom because of previous reading scores?

Assemblyman Elliot Anderson:

Again, it is supposed to take place postretention. My intent, and the way it is written in section 8 dealing with postretention issues, is the way it is intended to happen.

Senator Woodhouse:

I would like to share my experiences as a first-grade teacher who did retain students who were identified during the school year because of the need. One of the things teachers do is observe their students throughout the school year. We do not make these evaluations at the end of the year. The 17 years that I was a first-grade teacher, I met with a parent when I identified a child who was beginning to slip. Hopefully, through that year, we were able to bring that child along. If not, by late March or early April, I did meet with my principal and the parent, and make those recommendations. If that is done, as this bill certainly provides for, the parent is more comfortable with the teacher making the recommendation for retention. I feel very comfortable saying the retention of students that I had to recommend during those 17 years were very positive situations. There were times that I recommended the student be retained, especially in the first grade, because the student was immature and not progressing as quickly as they should have and needed more experience. In making that recommendation, the decision was made with the principal and the teacher that the child being retained in the first grade would either stay in my room or, if there was more than one first grade class, the parent could decide they wanted the child to have another experience. We would also be a part of

that decision. That was always successful, and the students, after spending that second year in first grade, moved on and did a great job in second grade.

I wanted to allay any fears that people might have about retaining children in kindergarten, first, or second grades. The earlier we can catch these children beginning to slip, the better. I love the fact that in this bill, we are putting forward opportunities for the student to have mentoring, tutoring, and additional resources made available to them. In the past, that was sometimes not available. This is very positive.

Senator Gustavson:

I am glad to see this bill come forward. We have seen similar bills in the past that did not even have a hearing. We are finally realizing that this is something we need to take a serious look at. Regarding the earlier question of limited English proficiency and not having the resources, you mentioned if we did not have the resources for that student we should pass them anyway. If we do pass that student who is not proficient in the English language into the next grade, they are going to continue to need those resources somewhere along the line. If they go into the fourth grade and are still not proficient in English, they are going to have problems keeping up with that grade, also. My thinking is that we should keep them in third grade until they are proficient in the English language.

Assemblyman Eliot Anderson:

We cannot expect things from students if we do not give them anything. If we do not set them up for success, it is not their fault—it is our fault. If we are going to say a student needs to be held back, we need to do our job as legislators to ensure that student has the proper resources to get that education and be set up for success. It is not on them. They are third graders. We are legislators who have a duty to provide the resources. I am personally not comfortable with not taking ownership if we have not given these children the resources.

Assemblywoman Diaz:

I was an English language learner specialist. You cannot penalize a student for coming to school with zero English language skills. It is not that they do not have the intellectual capacity to function normally within the classroom. Our hope with the prekindergarten initiatives and the kindergarten bills is that we give them that foundation so they can be successful. Research has shown that English language learners need three to seven years to perform academically at the same level as their monolingual, English speaking peers. If we were to retain them it does not mean they have not made the growth, and

that they are not on track to becoming successful; we just need to give them the time to blossom.

Senator Cegavske:

Page 27, section 10, of the Teachers and Leaders Council report states that the Teachers and Leaders Council of Nevada shall prescribe by regulation. My question is who is currently doing it, who is deciding the passing score, what is the difference, and why would we change it? Is the Teachers and Leaders Council a paid position or is it volunteer? Several places in the bill refer to section 10. That is why I am asking in reference to their being the administrative body that would prescribe some of these things. I am asking for some clarification.

Assemblyman Elliot Anderson:

To your first question of who does the score now, I do not know of any passing cut score that we currently have. We have levels of what is proficient and what is not proficient. We did not have a retention policy where we have had to have a cut score. Our existing statute for retention is section 12 of this bill, and that is the only language I am aware of that governs retention. The CRT for reading does exist. It is administered in the third grade, but there is no "passing score." That is something I needed to clarify, so thank you for asking that question.

Regarding the TLC being paid or not, I do believe it is possibly paid expenses. But I do not recall. We passed it in Assembly Bill No. 222 of the 76th Session. I will get back to you.

Senator Cegavske:

I was wondering why the score was to be obtained from the TLC? Was this the place for it? Where else could it have been placed? Could it have been with the State Board of Education? Did you look at any options, or was that the area of recommendation?

Assemblyman Elliot Anderson:

The reason I chose to have it drafted in that manner was that the TLC has parents represented on the council as well as administrators, teachers, superintendents, and school board members. The Regional Professional Development Program is represented as well so they can account for the professional development. There is also a designee from the State Superintendent of Schools, and finally, there are experts in education policy who can help us better determine what the scores should be. Parents will have input as we are talking about holding their children back, after all.

Vice Chairwoman Dondero Loop:

Are there additional comments or questions from the Committee? [There were none.] We will now hear testimony in support of A.B. 161.

Dr. Jane McCarthy, Lincy Professor of Education, Department of Teaching and Learning, College of Education, University of Nevada, Las Vegas:

We are supportive of the early intervention for reading that would occur from prekindergarten on up. The resources that we have already been using with the Clark County School District and other school districts are due to a close collaborative relationship. We have been developing projects with them over the 21 years that I have been associated with the University of Nevada, Las Vegas beginning with one of my own projects called "The Accelerated Schools Project." The project is designed to help all children reach the highest potential they can by providing intensive and rich educational experiences for them. Currently, at the College of Education we have the Gayle A. Zeiter Literacy Center which was funded by a generous donor in the community in memory of his deceased wife. The Center provides professional development in reading and literature, guest speakers, and intensive tutoring of students in reading and in literacy. In our preservice programs, all of our students being prepared to be elementary school teachers must take English as a second language course so they are prepared to work with children coming to school. As you know, in Clark County, the minority is the majority and a number of our children come to school speaking English as a second language. All of our students have at least six credit hours to work with children in the classroom who are second language learners. Our special education students have 12 hours, which gives them an endorsement in ESL. We also have classes in multicultural education, which all of our students must take, as well as a number of other initiatives we are involved in with the district. We have the Nevada Writing Project, part of the larger National Writing Project that provides opportunities for summer workshops for teachers and intensive work during the school year.

There is nothing in this bill that we disagree with in terms of the intervention students need to become good readers. We stand ready and willing to help in any way possible.

Scott Loe, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Educational Psychology and Higher Education, University of Nevada, Las Vegas:

To expand on what Dr. McCarthy mentioned, my involvement in kindergarten through third-grade literacy is through the reading skills development consortium. Through the consortium, the College of Education is collaborating

with Clark County School District to provide intensive literacy interventions in school-based sites, in the highest risk elementary schools.

We absolutely support the intervention recommendations that are outlined in Assembly Bill 161. We believe it is possible to get students who are English language learners who are struggling the most back up to a functional reading level by third grade. We are learning that it is a slow process, so early intervention is critical. If we can identify the students and get them into systematic and consistent programming in kindergarten or first grade, we can see small but steady incremental gains over the course of a three-year period. My hope would be that we are minimizing the extent to which retention will apply.

The only concern we have from our experience in implementing our pilot project thus far is that, anytime we do a systematic intervention that is mandated, there need to be provisions to ensure the intervention is implemented with quality to make sure we are not creating instructional casualties along the way. It is especially important with our ELL children, that we have the resources to monitor and provide intervention through high quality. A significant component of that is professional development, both for the classroom teachers who are providing the core literacy instruction, as well as for the special education instructors who are in the schools and dealing with the needs that are presented.

Lindsay Anderson, representing Washoe County School District:

Washoe County School District (WCSD) certainly agrees that all children should be at proficiency level in all grades. Third-grade literacy is a critical milestone in a child's education. [Read from prepared text ([Exhibit F](#)).]

Ailene Azzam, Private Citizen, Washoe County, Nevada:

I am a teacher in the Washoe County School District (WCSD) and I have been waiting for a policy like this for the past 18 years. I have taught first through fourth grade, and I am currently teaching the second grade. What we see happening developmentally is children will start school in May because they can. Children with May through September birthdays are about six months behind the children who have October through April birthdays. They tend to struggle with reading significantly. What happens in reading instruction in kindergarten or a first-grade room is entirely different than a third-grade room. I would encourage that retention be looked at in the early ages. In WCSD, retention is not encouraged. I have retained six students and they have been very successful. However, counselors will say that studies show that retention affects graduation rates. It would be good for the school district to be retrained

regarding how important retention is, especially for the developmentally young children who really need to repeat first grade so they are successful.

When you talk about 90 minutes of uninterrupted reading instruction that currently takes place in my classroom, that does not mean they are sitting in class getting only that instruction. A lot is happening within that 90 minutes, but what it provides is that you cannot send your students to library or to computers. When the block scheduling is done, it needs to allow those students to be in 90 minutes worth of reading instruction. I do encourage you to continue with 90 minutes of uninterrupted instruction so that the teacher has the ability to say, "This is my reading block." It used to be that way in WCSD, kindergarten through second grade.

I also have a concern with the CRT. Although I have not administered that test in many years, often we get children who can read really well, but they do not understand a word they are reading. They are young, and developmentally they really need to stay in a first-grade classroom. My recommendation would be that we could evaluate these children early and have third-grade retention be the last resort.

Assemblywoman Diaz:

I would like to know, as an educator in the classroom and in working with the students, do you feel you have enough support to help with the interventions to get your students caught up? Many of my colleagues feel we are strapped for resources and support.

Ailene Azzam:

Every year I have approximately five students who enter reading way below grade level. They are usually young. The difference is that I teach at a school where the parents, when told what is needed, respond with enthusiasm. I have a lot of support from the parents. They get involved and do whatever is required of them. If I have a student who continues to struggle, it tends to be because the parents are not participating as much. I have taught in at-risk schools and left because it is very difficult to be an educator and have parents say they do not have time to help because they are working three jobs. I personally have a lot of support, but it comes from the student's parents, not necessarily the school district. This turns out to be really successful. Retention has worked for all of the students I have retained. When I am about to retain a student, I have the other students come in and meet with the student we are talking about retaining, and that student will always say, "Now I am the smartest one in the class." It is because they have that additional year really early on.

The way I teach reading is so different than the third-grade teacher. They need what is happening in kindergarten if it is full day, or in the first grade. Our school district needs a lot more support, especially at the at-risk schools.

Assemblywoman Diaz:

At the inner-city, at-risk schools, do they find that sometimes it could be the lack of educational background the parents have and the language barrier?

Ailene Azzam:

Maybe even IQ as well. Many of the parents have low IQs, and the children have low IQs. It is a lot of things, like not being read to. Some of my students were read to in utero. When I taught the child development class at the University of Phoenix, we looked at cases with two children, where one was never talked to, read to, or played with and the other was. The difference in vocabulary is noticeable. I have students in second grade who are reading well above sixth or seventh grade. It really is about what happens in the home and I do not know how we can fix what is happening in the home other than educating the parents.

Assemblyman Munford:

You have intrigued us. In terms of comprehension, you said that the children knew a lot of words and could read really well, but do they understand what they are reading? What do you do in terms of trying to help the student understand what they are reading? Do you have a plan or a method?

Ailene Azzam:

You do have to work on comprehension, so that is a strategy you work with your students on the whole day, not just the reading block of time. I do a lot of comprehension through math, social studies, and science. The students who have a hard time with comprehension tend to be young for their grade.

I had a little boy with a summer birthday the other day whose mother is hugging him in a picture and when asked how she was feeling, he said "She is feeling big." You can see that the mother was happy about this project.

It is the young children and the learning disabled who struggle with learning something beyond their developmental levels, but that is different than the normal child. We know children can learn things at different times. When I am teaching a child who has not even turned seven yet and will not until September, and I have other children who are already eight, the discrepancy is large, and you can see that. Part of it is the birthday issue—when a child can start school. Parents put their children in school to get them out of daycare.

I really believe that if we look at developmental levels and at children who are struggling, even socially, that is going to cause more problems with reading and understanding. Definitely, as a teacher, you have to teach comprehension embedded throughout the day, not just in reading.

Assemblyman Munford:

What school are you teaching at?

Ailene Azzam:

Elizabeth Lenz Elementary School in Reno.

**Vicenta Montoya, representing Si Se Poede Latino Democratic Caucus,
Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I am speaking in favor of Assembly Bill 161. I do have concerns however, regarding the exemptions for limited English proficiency. The reality is that for the past two years there has not been an ELL program. The ELL students from third grade on are on a cliff and go dramatically down. Since we do not have the ELL support, it does no favor to have this exemption. Students who are not able to read by third grade are not going to attain that skill in fourth or fifth grade to the proficiency they need. It is going to be reading that is necessary beyond just reading in English. It is a skill needed for science and math. Many of these students cannot pass the math proficiency test because they cannot read the math word problems. With all deference to Assemblywoman Diaz, I have looked at the statistics and I am appalled. I would prefer that students get that additional assistance of the 90 minutes of uninterrupted reading, as well as other support such as small class sizes. If it requires retention, that is better than a less than 50 percent graduation rate at the end of high school or dropping out. That investment is necessary.

Ellen Holmes, representing Clark County Education Association:

I am the Director of Professional Learning for the Clark County Education Association (CCEA). I am presenting remarks on behalf of the members of CCEA.

Assembly Bill 161 is a test-based promotion policy. If students cannot meet a determined literacy benchmark, they will be retained. Test-based promotion policies are most likely to be successful only if they are accompanied by specific requirements that retained students be provided with additional, research-based instruction in reading and, the most important part, adequate funding to implement those requirements. Those requirements should have significant data systems, significant professional learning, and the right-sized classes in which to

experience these multi-tiers of support. [Read from prepared testimony ([Exhibit G](#)).]

The key feature had nothing to do with the benchmark or being held back. The Florida program actually emphasizes strong, targeted interventions starting in their prekindergarten programs, first, second, and third grade. Parents are already well-informed through the process so that in third grade, in June, it is not a surprise their child is being held back.

Florida also makes sure that if the student is retained, it is not just a do-over. We have to ensure if students are retained they are not doing more of the same things that did not already work for them. [Continued reading prepared testimony ([Exhibit G](#)).]

With regard to the authority for setting the literacy benchmark for admittance to fourth grade being placed with the Teacher and Leaders Council, I would argue after watching several of their meetings, this is not their area of expertise. This decision may be more appropriately placed with the State Board of Education or with a new group to be pulled together.

Dotty Merrill, representing Nevada Association of School Boards:

When the Executive Committee and the Board of Directors for the Nevada Association of School Boards met on January 25 to consider potential legislative issues, they did not have this specific proposal in hand. [Read from prepared testimony ([Exhibit H](#)).]

Lonnie Shields, representing Nevada Association of School Administrators:

At the risk of breaking the rules I would like to withdraw my amendment because I would like to speak in support of this bill. I never want to go on the record as being in opposition of this bill in any way, so we will address our concerns regarding the amendment in another manner.

I wish to thank the Committee for bringing this bill forward. This is a problem that has plagued educators since Horace Mann and the beginning of compulsory education. Foremost in our mind, however, should always be the best interest of the students in our care. Retention is never an easy decision to make. It will not be too difficult to set a bar in reading that must be met by students before they leave the third grade, but what will not be easy will be making the decision to retain those who have not reached that bar.

The bill does an excellent job in providing guidelines for promoting some students who do not reach the bar. They are good guidelines and they are

reasons that any good principal would look at before they ever grant a retention in the first place.

I waive speaking about how good retentions are made because Senator Woodhouse nailed that subject exactly in her testimony. When I was a principal, one of the things I did was send a note on February 1, to all of my teachers telling them, "Look at your class and tell me which students you are looking at, which ones are you are considering to retain. We have to get the parents in here to meet with you, and with me, get them on board." What I found throughout my years as a principal, and I think principals will back me up on this, is that retentions will only be successful when you have the parent on your side. It is very difficult to retain a student without the parent on your side. They end up taking problems home because with some parents it then becomes the student's fault that they are not achieving. Those parents get tough on the child, and then they get tough on the teachers and then on me. It is a difficult situation.

The logistics of the problem include such decisions as does the student stay with the same teacher? Does the student move to a different teacher in the school even if the parents feel strongly about that student moving to a different school, so they have an entirely new perspective going forward? Those are just a few of the things I think we should look at when we are looking at retention. I support the move toward this bill. It is positive, and we are moving in the right direction.

Stephen Augspurger, representing Clark County Association of School Administrators:

For 30 years I was a teacher, principal, and area superintendent, supervising secondary education for the Clark County School District. Never before have I seen a bill or a piece of legislation that impacts the outcome of education for all students across the State of Nevada in such an extraordinary fashion. For the first time, we have a bill which can really improve what students are doing because of the interventions that are so pervasive through this bill.

I am here today to speak in support of Assembly Bill 161. That support comes with only one reservation and that is, the interventions as listed have the capacity to change the way we instruct students who are not achieving, and unless they are appropriately funded we are going to continue, in spite of this bill, to be mired at the bottom of every education report that is published. Again, we speak strongly in favor of the bill, and want to be on record as such.

Dale Norton, Superintendent, Nye County School District:

I am a member of the Nevada Association of Superintendents, the Acting President of the Nevada Association of School Administrators, and I am also a Teachers and Leaders Council (TLC) member.

The Nye County School District supports the concept of Assembly Bill 161 and has a high level of interest in the follow-up of the Joint Committee meeting in regard to the fiscal impact. As a member of the TLC, I have a concern regarding their determining the cut score for the reading proficiency. As a member of that committee, I do not see that as the mission of the TLC. That is something that can be discussed at a later time.

Miranda Jones, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am a mother of four, three of whom attend public school. I have a son who has struggled in school. In first grade, I tried to retain him as he was performing poorly in reading and all other subjects. I met with the teacher throughout the year. I was very involved in his education. I had him tutored and halfway through the year we came to the conclusion that we could retain him. When we went to the principal, she would not allow us to retain him. He is now in third grade and still struggling. I am still facing the same problems I have had since first grade. I feel very discouraged that I have not been able to retain him and have him get the education that he needs. As a mother, I am home with him every day and see his struggles, and it is very difficult to see him go through this. I do everything I can to help him succeed in school. I believe parents should have the right to influence the decision of whether or not their child should advance to the next grade. I feel that social promotion in early grades only hurts our children. I would urge your support for A.B. 161.

Pat Skorkowsky, Deputy Superintendent, Instruction Unit, Clark County School District:

In looking at Assembly Bill 161, there is a strong agreement that every student must be reading at grade level by the end of the third grade to ensure their success. Every indicator shows that is the most important time as we are shifting from learning to read, to learning. The Superintendent has set some very specific goals for our students in the Clark County School District (CCSD) regarding reading at grade level in the first, third, and fifth grades. We know that is an important piece.

Education is shifting a little from the Three Rs that we know from the past. We have already shifted to rigor, relevance, and relationships in our school district. With early education we need to shift to the three I's—instruction, identification, and intervention. With the instruction, we need to ensure our

students are receiving that grade-level instruction so we can see if they are proficient by the benchmarks we have set. Identification is for those students who are not meeting those benchmarks and ensuring that we know who they are and exactly where they are instructionally to provide the best instruction possible to ensure success. Then there are intervention programs that have been talked about, to ensure they are getting the extra attention to help catch them up to that proficient level. In an ideal education setting, the three I's would increase the success of our students. It would not only do that, but it would decrease the dropouts we see in the higher level grades, because the students are seeing success and are able to move forward in that educational environment.

We understand the implications, however. There are some resource issues such as the assessment pieces looking at reading intervention programs, professional development, and then looking at the IEP for a student ensuring that every teacher knows every student in every classroom, and that they are responsible for their instruction.

Clark County has already implemented a strong response to the instruction model to ensure we know exactly where these students are and what we are doing.

We have to strengthen that model and this will give us the opportunity to do that through the support of this bill as it goes forward. We believe it will increase parent engagement as well. Parent engagement is at many levels, not just the parent who is volunteering in the classroom on a daily basis, but even parents who are working with their students at home. We appreciate the fact that it does engage the parents and provides accountability both for the teacher in the classroom and the parents at home to assist those students who are struggling.

We know the bill draft contains language for ELL students and special education students, and we recognize the need so that we can stay in compliance with federal laws.

In response to Assemblyman Stewart's request, I would ask that we look at "the superintendent or his designee." The number of students just this year that we would be retaining is 9,000 of our 25,000 third-graders. We need to put these programs in place with resources. We also need to give Superintendent Jones a break because I do not know if we could get those 9,000 letters signed individually. Again, resources are the key to success and we know the key to success is that early intervention program, and ensuring we

have that full-day program for kindergarten to set them up from the very beginning so they are reading at level by the end of the benchmarks we have set forth in the Clark County School District.

Assemblywoman Diaz:

I would like to know what we need in order to achieve the three I's short term.

Pat Skorkowsky:

Some of the things we need specifically are instructional materials for the common core level for those early literacy grades to ensure that we are matching curriculum programs with the instruction level these students would be expected to master on the national level. We also need common assessment so we can identify and have established standards across the state to ensure success of those students, and make sure we have the early identification of the students who are not meeting those benchmarks. With regard to the intervention programs, we need to be able to have the time with the students in a small group or individual setting, depending upon the tier instruction—tier two for the group setting, or tier three for the individual student. Those are three pieces we need to have in place to get these students on track and ready to move forward.

Senator Kihuen:

There was a comment made about the IQ level of the parents. In your opinion, do you think a parent's IQ level determines whether the student succeeds or not?

Pat Skorkowsky:

No. When parents are working multiple jobs, we understand that their time is limited. I do not believe that parent IQ affects the ability to help a student at home, especially in the early grades. We know that parents are engaged in their children's education at our schools, especially in our elementary and secondary Title I schools, so they are able to assist their children at home with the basic needs. I do not agree with that statement.

Vice Chairwoman Dondero Loop:

I would probably say that none of us agree with that statement.

Senator Kihuen:

My mother is a housekeeper, a very proud woman, and a hardworking person. I think the fact that I am sitting here as a State Senator representing 125,000 people, speaks volumes of having parental involvement regardless of their profession or IQ level. I just want that for the record.

Assemblywoman Diaz:

I did not hear Mr. Skorkowsky mention teacher professional development to improve the instruction. That is a critical component. As we listen through the bill, we know teachers are the motor that drives the education system. The more efficient the teacher is, the better prepared and equipped they are to advance our students. I did not hear that.

Pat Skorkowsky:

I did have it in my written testimony. Professional development for our teachers is essential, not only in intervention strategies, but also in common strategies to ensure teachers are able to meet those individual student needs. I apologize for the omission, but I can tell you that professional development is essential.

Craig M. Stevens, representing Nevada State Education Association:

I do not want to be redundant as a lot of good testimony has taken place, especially from Ms. Holmes. She was on point with her testimony along with Assemblywoman Diaz regarding the professional development piece.

The only query I would like to make is about support for students and educators. There is a transition of being retained, and there is a stigma to being retained. If you do not provide the necessary support, there will be disruption in class. It will be a path to drop out. We really need to be careful so our educators, especially those who will be teaching those students who are held back, have the ability to teach the whole class and to be able to put their attention on those students who need the most help along with all of the other students. If the support is not there, the student is not going to feel he or she belongs. That could be a problem within the class for many years until we lose him or her. That is what I really wanted to put on the record.

Laura Porreca, Private Citizen, Henderson, Nevada:

My stance is that I support the bill, with many questions, but I do not know if this is the proper forum.

Vice Chairwoman Dondero Loop:

You could register your support briefly, then perhaps off the record, we can get your questions answered. Would that work? We would love to have them submitted to us.

Laura Porreca:

This is a complex issue, and one that deserves dialogue. The problem is that we have students entering fourth grade who are nonproficient and, therefore, cannot master grade level material. Research points to a dim future for those

students not caught up by third grade. The following argument is my professional opinion on the matter.

Research on retention historically indicates negative gains on student learning and an increased likelihood that students will drop out. There have been recent exceptions that included remedial programs providing research-based instruction from high-performing teachers but that begs the question, is it the retention, or the high quality interventions that are responsible for the success?

One of my questions is about the exclusion of students. If they had an IEP, obviously you would not be retained, but I taught third grade last year and some students do not have an IEP yet. They have to be two years below level to even qualify for the process. In kindergarten and first grade it is almost impossible to begin that process. I brought a third-grade student to the meeting and by the end of the year, it was deemed he was not low enough to be retained. Had he been a candidate for special education, but not yet identified, how does this bill address that student? We do not want to retain students who should not be retained as they will end up having an IEP and become a special education student.

Another issue is the funding. I realize this is not the forum to speak of that, but I am on the front line. I am out there where we have mandates and no money to accomplish them. If you give someone a task, but make it impossible for them to perform that task, it is very daunting.

As an example, my daughter had 45 students in her Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) class last year. It is a teacher issue of 45-to-1 student ratio for the really bright students. In Clark County we teach the low-performing students for at least a half an hour a day at a 6-to-1 student ratio. If they are very low-performing, it is a 3-to-1 ratio. We already have an exorbitant amount of resources going to the low-achieving students. When we initiate a new program, we do not give it enough time to see what will happen. We are starting the programs working with students on tier two and tier three, and what happens to those programs if we initiate this new third-grade retention?

Vice Chairwoman Dondero Loop:

I thank you for those questions. If you will submit them to us, we will try to answer them. The classroom size bill is the next bill, Assembly Bill 162. We hope that you will stay and listen to the rest of the testimony.

Fernando Romero, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I come in support of the bill, but I need to point out at least three things. I have had four children go through the Clark County School District. Two are already professionals, an architect and an attorney, and I have one that is a freshman in high school, as well as, believe it or not, a third grader. My third grader is doing excellently considering that he is a special needs student. My 8-year-old has had four teachers in the CCSD, each one better than the last and excellent teachers. I take my hat off to them for the time and effort they have dedicated to my son and his classmates. However, I am concerned that ELL students are being addressed as if they were nonexistent. They exist in tremendous numbers in CCSD. The problem is, as all of us know, there is no funding for these individuals.

Vice Chairwoman Dondero Loop:

I will remind you sir, that we are a policy committee, so we are not talking about funding. I know it is difficult to separate the two, but we need to do that.

Fernando Romero:

I brought it up merely because of the fact the students are not getting the service. There is a clause here that is going to push them out instead of helping them. It does bother me tremendously.

As a special needs student, my child is enrolled in the mainstream classes. This is my second concern. How can teachers be expected to teach our children the way they need to when they have class sizes of 26 to 28 students?

Vice Chairwoman Dondero Loop:

Once again, I will remind you that A.B. 162 is the next bill to be heard.

Fernando Romero:

My child needs an IEP. According to a newspaper reporter who spoke to me, the school district is considering stopping translating those IEPs to parents who have no concept of what an IEP may be and do not know the language in which the IEPs are written. Now the district is considering taking the IEP out of the access of parents who already find the process difficult to understand. Allowing the student to pass into the next grade is not right. It should not be included.

Robin Vircsik, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I teach in the Clark County School District, and I do support the previous parent. I would like to take the initiative to speak for him and say that I believe it would

help this bill to amend it to read that the ELL student could be retained if they were not at grade level. They would then have an extra year to learn what they need to learn. That is what he was saying—he would like to amend this bill.

Vice Chairwoman Dondero Loop:

We absolutely agree with him.

John Ellsworth, representing Parent Leaders for Education, Reno, Nevada:

Parent Leaders for Education is a nonpartisan, all-volunteer organization comprised of parents, concerned citizens, educators, community leaders and business owners who vote and advocate for public education. [Read from prepared text ([Exhibit I](#)).]

Vice Chairwoman Dondero Loop:

I believe we have completed the support portion of testimony. Is there anyone in opposition?

Ignacio Prado, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

My main reservation and the reason I would not support this bill is, in particular, we seem to be defining how students' progress very narrowly and in a way we know, given research, can be biased against a particular group of people. If you teach on the east side of Clark County versus the west side, you would notice a huge discrepancy in who would be retained. If you look at statistics at my school, they would mirror what some people had as reservations at the county level, and that is that our school would be underwater. Many of our third graders will not meet a proficiency bar on a CRT this year.

I have taught second, third, and fourth grades in Clark County and I have noticed some students will not be proficient on the CRT because it is a context review. This means you are not allowed to interact with the student task, which is not in their home language. As someone mentioned previously, sometimes it takes three to seven years if the student is not in that window. Research has shown categorically it is unfair to them.

The exceptions give some notice to that fact, but it says something about two years of best practices, when we know that many have received four years of what we would call best practice. Still we see large numbers of students who are English language learners in our schools who are not proficient. I teach in a departmentalized grade level, which means I actually do not teach reading. I teach mathematics. If I look at my classroom, many of the students who are not proficient in reading are actually proficient in mathematics in third grade.

Given a little more interaction and a more holistic view, they would be considered, in my opinion, to belong in my classroom, just having difficulty with language, be that for whatever reason such as home environment and vocabulary deficits. I teach interventions in reading also, and I am familiar with the three-tier model of whole group. We perform that function at my school. With some of our students, no matter what we do for their ability to code, they just have giant vocabulary deficits, or have not built certain concepts, due to a lack of experience. Therefore, I feel the CRT reading is categorically stacked against them in that sense.

Those are things that could probably be addressed through the exceptions, but it worries me that we are doing it backwards. We are automatically retaining third graders, and given what research says about retention and the impact it can have on them psychologically, socially, and on their ability to persist through to graduation, we are unfairly stacking the odds against the third grader versus what we know. If those students had received services in prekindergarten and the correct interventions for the last four years, then they might have been proficient in third grade. Research shows that third grade seems to be too late. I am not sure that one year of services within a third grade context similar to the one they just received, is the answer.

Assemblywoman Diaz:

Would your concerns be alleviated if an English language learner had more assessment tools available in order to consider retaining an ELL, such as their English Language Acquisition Assessment, or other vehicles we would look at to make a sound determination?

Ignacio Prado:

That would definitely address the issue. Making the CRT the first pass and then to do the follow-up through portfolios and other things to justify that a child is going to persist through the next grades, puts undue burden on that school's teachers and administrators, who work very hard.

Vice Chairwoman Dondero Loop:

Is there anyone neutral in Carson City or in Las Vegas? [There was no one.]
Assemblyman Anderson will give his closing remarks.

Assemblyman Elliot Anderson:

To conclude, I would like to emphasize that ending social promotion, reading by grade three, is not something to be taken on its own. It is not just retention. It is also getting into the student's life early and often. We are talking prekindergarten. That is what Florida did. Universal prekindergarten was voter

approved. It involves more instruction time early. If you wait until third grade as you have heard, that is the latest point, but it is really too late. We have to keep in mind it is not just as simple as demanding that someone is up to grade level, or demanding that someone can read. We have to give them the tools to succeed. Without providing the tools they need to succeed, there is no point holding the student back, because it is not going to work. The problem is not solved by holding a child back if you do not give them the tools they need.

Senator Kihuen:

Thank you for bringing this bill forward. Is there a particular reason why the test scores would be determined by the Teachers and Leaders Counsel (TLC) rather than the State Board of Education?

Assemblyman Elliot Anderson:

I would refer you to my earlier answer. I want to involve more people in the process in determining the cut score, because it is something that is very complicated. I want to ensure that every group, including parents and education experts has a voice in determining that cut score. That was my intent.

Senator Kihuen:

Do you believe that TLC is diverse enough to represent all interested parties?

Assemblyman Elliot Anderson:

I personally think it is the best option and something we can certainly look toward changing. I have heard there is some issue with that, and I would always have an open mind to discuss different options.

Vice Chairwoman Dondero Loop:

I will close the hearing on Assembly Bill 161 and we will open the hearing on Assembly Bill 162. We will welcome Assemblywoman Marilyn Kirkpatrick and Senator Debbie Smith.

[Chairman Elliot T. Anderson assumed the chair.]

**Assembly Bill 162: Revises provisions governing class-size reduction.
(BDR 34-724)**

Assemblywoman Marilyn Kirkpatrick, Clark County Assembly District No. 1:

I am here today to introduce and speak to you about Assembly Bill 162.

A recent survey in Nevada shows that class-size reduction is important to the parents, the students, and the constituents we represent. We often hear from parents, students, and teachers that class-size matters and that our current class sizes are too high. [Read from prepared testimony ([Exhibit J](#)).] On a personal note, when my oldest daughter was in kindergarten, I was in the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and I was making those phone calls as a concerned parent to make sure we had smaller class sizes. My daughter is now 22 years old, and we have not made much progress. In perspective, we talk about it often, on where we were back then and how far we have actually come. [Continued reading from prepared testimony.]

I will tell you that on the accountability part, we want to make sure the people know what the classrooms are that they are sending their child into so there is awareness. We want to make sure the district is doing their part as well.

Before I introduce Senator Smith, I do want to run through the bill section by section. [Continued reading from prepared testimony ([Exhibit J](#)).]

With regard to the calculation of class-size ratios, many times we have roving teachers who may be in arts or physical education. If you have ever been in a third-grade physical education class there may really be 90 children in that class that you are actually trying to teach some activity to. Imagine teaching 90 third graders in the 47 minutes you have for that period.

The quarterly reports to the Interim Finance Committee (IFC) are to have some accountability, and once it is through IFC it is public, so we know what direction we going.

In 2009 statutes, we saw that all districts were getting class-size reduction variances because they could never reach the goal of a 15-to-1 ratio. That should not be the normal, yearly process we work through. It should be the exception in circumstances that cannot be helped. I would ask that we have a discussion, work on some of the numbers and work to restore what is important to our constituents, our parents, and most of all, to our students to ensure they get the education they need.

Senator Debbie Smith, Washoe County Senate District No. 13:

I want to give a little context to this discussion by remembering the campaign to pass class-size reduction and the button saying, "Who's for Kids and Who's just Kidding?"

When this class-size reduction legislation was first passed, we were a leader in the country on this issue. It was something for us to be very proud of. We were making an investment in the children in this state and in the lower grades. As Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick pointed out, we have never met our goals. We have never funded what the statute indicates.

Many of you probably saw some pretty extensive media coverage during the campaign last year about class size. Both in the north and south the media were inquiring why what they were seeing in classrooms did not match what the statute stated. Part of it was we never funded it to what the ratios say, and part of it was during the economic downturn in the 2010 Special Session, we allowed the districts to add students to those numbers which is the \$95 million that you see that we cut. We would suggest it is time we add back. Part of it is that the reporting requirement in the accountability is based on district-wide numbers, not school-by-school numbers.

I am sympathetic to the districts because we have always put them in an untenable position where we have not adequately funded what we are requiring of them, and yet their numbers do not look as good as they should. In some ways, this legislation makes it tougher on the districts, and unless we get to the facts and truth of the matter, it is going to be hard for us to improve.

The policy discussion around this is really important. We have never gone back to the policy of what the numbers are, what the reporting looks like, and it is a really good time, as we are talking through all of these issues, that we make sure the reporting is what we want. Even if the accountability is based on a district-wide basis, we thought it was really important that schools have to report on an individual basis so parents really know how many children are in a classroom at their schools.

I am here to say this is an important time for us to discuss the policy of class-size reduction and also discuss when we will begin to restore the money we have cut in the last four years to solve our budget problem. That \$95 million is only two students in a classroom as the level we cut to, but as you know, that grows exponentially in the individual classrooms. It sounds easy that you are only adding two students, but it does not work out that way in every classroom. We really need to have this discussion. We need to talk about restoring that money because we know the people we represent care deeply about how many children are in the classroom. You saw it in the recently released poll that the Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick referenced. I do not know about you, but I hear it at any town hall or any meeting, and I hear it at

the door when I am out during campaign season. Class size is a very important issue to our constituents.

I look forward to working on this with the Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick and all of you and being able to look at the policy and the funding.

Chairman Elliot Anderson:

Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick, before we take questions, do you want to talk about your amendment, or do you want to wait?

Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick:

The amendment is to change the number so we can figure out what the right number is ([Exhibit K](#)). If we are going to have a policy discussion we should be fluid with that number knowing what the direction of the Committee is. This amendment makes that one little change in the number to put it back to what the statute currently says, which is 15. I am a proponent of cleaning up the statute, or following the statute.

Senator Cegavske:

I am excited about this discussion. Thank you for having an open discussion. As we have talked about class-size reduction through the years, we have always heard from the school districts that they wanted flexibility. I am just throwing that out to you not only for Clark and Washoe Counties, but for the rural areas as well. They have different students of different ages in different class sizes. The biggest question now, is how many of our school districts are on a variance from what we have already been doing? If we have more children in kindergarten through third grade that year, you would know fourth and fifth grades could be larger in the next year. Studies say if you have class-size reduction through third grade, then it does not do any good if you have the larger classes after. I am just throwing that out for discussion purposes regarding the flexibility. That ties in with the rural concerns I have.

Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick:

They currently have that variance and waiver process they can use.

Senator Cegavske:

I just wondered how many were still on the variance.

Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick:

I do not know anyone who is actually meeting the class-size reduction at this point in time. That is unfortunate because for the past two legislative sessions we have given a lot of flexibility so they can. Remember, in a district, it is

formulated on "district-wide." Two third grade classes may have fewer students than the ratio, but five may not. That process does need to stay in place because we do need to give flexibility when we cannot adjust quickly. However, we do need to start reaching back to our original goal. I want to make sure we begin talking about how we get back to the original statute, allow flexibility, but not make it the normal process.

Senator Debbie Smith:

The rural districts have had the flexibility for a number of years and that has worked well for them. I have always been a little nervous about flexibility or increasing the numbers until we have a better handle on this. You can see what happened with just the flexibility we had in 2010. Look at the class sizes that we now know exist. Until we see how this is going, I do not think we should expand the numbers, because we are already at class sizes that are too large, in my opinion. We need to proceed very cautiously with flexibility until we see where we are and how we are funding it.

Assemblywoman Dondero Loop:

I taught during the time we instituted class-size reduction. It does make a difference when you can have that one-on-one time with children. It does make a difference when you have time to talk to parents. It does make a difference when you can work in small groups with students who have different needs. You may have a group of children who are just having trouble with a certain group of reading or math skills. It really does make a difference to have smaller classes and be able to give that one-on-one attention.

Assemblyman Kirner:

I agree with my colleague's statements. I believe smaller classes are beneficial. I know the objective is to get back to the 15-to-1 ratio. However, do we have any empirical data that says 15-to-1 is the right answer, or that 16-to-1 is the right answer? Obviously, if the numbers get larger, it does not make any sense.

Senator Debbie Smith:

The data varies and there is nothing concrete to say what ratio is the perfect ratio. If I could wind back to those discussions when this was originally passed, it was a bit of a fete to get to what the perfect number was. Keep in mind that we have never even funded what we landed on originally. That is our point. There is no magic number. What we know, again, is if you do not keep the number low, unless you have a classroom-by-classroom requirement, which would be impossible to deal with, you are going to end up with classes that are significantly larger than what you are requiring and what you are funding.

The answer is no, but the general census is that if you do not keep it down, you are going to wind up with classes much larger than you intended.

Chairman Elliot Anderson:

I am currently attending the William S. Boyd School of Law at University of Nevada, Las Vegas and they have one of the top tier legal writing programs in the country, tied with Harvard and Yale. Those classes are 16-to-1 ratio and I have to tell you that I have never learned so much in one year of instruction. I cannot remember ever having a class that small. You need to remember the people who attend these classes are not your average run-of-the-mill students. You have students who have been in the top of their classes over and over again. The general consensus with us is, in that year of legal writing instruction, we have learned more about writing than we have in four years of undergraduate work. I just wanted to throw that on the record as an anecdote.

Assemblyman Munford:

If you exceed 15, is it not a common practice to place another adult into that class? I know that may incur extra expenses, but I know there are two adults in a classroom. I have visited schools in my district and in terms of class size, there are usually two adults in the classroom. Can you respond to that?

Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick:

As a parent, being in the schools, I would tell you that yes, you get an assistant after 35 students, but what do you do in between? There are ratios for each classroom, but you have to hit the trigger before an additional hire. How fair is that to the student during that process? Why should they not have a teacher who can spend all of their time with them? Is the assistant actually doing what the teacher is doing, or are they just walking around the classroom? What I would say is that students deserve a teacher to teach them.

Senator Debbie Smith:

My response would be that it depends. In some schools and in some classes they have extra help, but I will be clear that this is part of what we have seen cut in the past five years—the extra people who are in our schools to add to the classroom when classes are too big or when you have a particular population that needs extra help. These are the types of positions we have cut over the years. It really depends. We have many classes that are too large and where there is no extra teaching personnel in that classroom.

Assemblyman Munford:

I have visited many of the schools, and the numbers of enrollment in the class are not much more than 20, if that. They always have two teachers.

Senator Woodhouse:

I, too, have a comment for the record. As I indicated earlier, I was a first-grade teacher for 17 years, and that was before the days of class-size reduction. My very first year of teaching, I had 34 first graders all year long. It was very tough. We all do the best we can, but in my 17th year, I moved to second grade and I had 19 students. It was night and day what I could do and what my students could do. It was a phenomenal experience. The time you can spend with students and the opportunities you have to catch a student who is beginning to fall through the cracks or needs that extra help, is something you can do if you have that small class size. It is critical that we pursue this bill and I thank Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick and Senator Smith for bringing this forward.

Assemblywoman Diaz:

How much wiggle room are we giving the districts to apply for the variance? On many occasions, count day comes and we are short the students that were projected. Then a determination has to be made about what grade levels we are cutting. Am I going to increase my fifth grade up to 40 kids to a classroom, or do I just add a little more to my first and second grade variable numbers? I would like to get some perspective and insight to just how much wiggle room the schools or districts will have to apply for these variances moving forward.

Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick:

No one knows. Count days are very painful for a lot of people. You either lose teachers or you move a lot of students. It is almost a traumatizing day during the third week in September. The district is probably the better one to answer that as they currently know what flexibility they have. I do think we need to make sure for accountability, on a more regular basis of how it is working, as opposed to learning in the spring. I will let the district answer that.

Assemblywoman Diaz:

We also need to work on the fourth and fifth grades. This year I have the daunting task of teaching 30-plus students in my fifth-grade classes. For your perspective, if you are lucky, you can spend one minute per week, one-on-one with each student in that class, so you tell me how much headway a teacher can make devoting one minute of one-on-one with our students.

Joyce Haldeman, representing Clark County School District:

The battle for class-size reduction was a raging battle. It was a landmark time and we were able to make some headway.

We are happy that this bill has been brought forth for discussion. However, we are not really crazy about all of the reporting that this will require. We are worried about how we will be able to meet all of those requirements, but this is such an important topic. We have been going through this session talking about other things that are also important, such as funding for ELL programs, expanding full-day kindergarten, and talking about the third-grade literacy bill we just heard. All of those things are really important to us, and we think they are a good process that we need to go through. However, the district's No. 1 priority right now is to fill in the holes we have experienced as we have gone through the budget cuts. You have seen our presentations regarding the years of budget cuts and how it has taken its toll on our schools. For us, getting back to a reasonable class size is more important than any of the other things we were talking about.

On the Nevada Electronic Legislative Information System (NELIS), you will see a chart ([Exhibit L](#)) that shows our historic class sizes. I did not even go back a decade before this chart, to when class sizes were even lower than they are here. You can see that in 2003, school allocations for teachers were at 16-to-1 ratio in grades one and two, 19-to-1 ratio in grade three, 30-to-1 ratio in grades four and five, and 32-to-1 ratio in grades six through twelve. We have been able to keep our magnet schools at 28-to-1 ratio. That is one of the perks of going to a magnet school, and it is one of the reasons our magnet schools are more successful than some of the other schools, as they have a slightly lower class-size ratio.

You can follow the numbers through the years and see when, in the year 2010, we needed to begin increasing class sizes to make our budget work. We increased Grade 4 and Grade 5 by one. When we did this, it was a very unpopular move, because in the same school, one teacher could have 31 students or even more. If you were a first- or second-grade teacher, you only had 16 students in your class. That was a difficult transition for some of the teachers to deal with.

You can see in that in the next year we had to raise all of them ([Exhibit L](#)). We raised them to 18 students in Grade 1 and Grade 2, which is where they are now; in Grade 3 to 21 students; and then Grade 4 and Grade 5 we are now at 34 students, as we talked about earlier. At the secondary schools we are at 38-to-1 ratio.

As stated earlier, that is the way we calculate the allocation, but the math never works out that way. There is always someone who has a smaller class size than that, and there are always many class sizes larger than that. In the

secondary schools where there is an advanced placement (AP) chemistry class funded at 38-to-1 ratio, if there are only 10 students taking AP chemistry, that means those 28 students are in someone else's classroom. We do have some very serious problems with the large size of our classes.

We have heard that if you would just do the math, you could see that Clark County School District, obviously is not doing this right. We have about 17,000 licensed personnel. If you divide that into the 311,000 students that would give you an 18-to-1 ratio. I want to make sure you understand why that type of simplistic math does not work to calculate class size. We do have 5,811, about one-third of our teaching staff, who are not assigned to a traditional classroom. In one group we have 888 teachers, who are our specialists who teach music, art, and physical education. This also includes librarians in elementary schools and humanities teachers in elementary schools. The reason we have those teachers off ratio is because they go into the classroom and take the children who are assigned to a particular teacher during a particular time. That is how, with our collective bargaining agreement, we were able to provide prep time during school hours for our teachers. That was an agreement that has been in place for many years. Without those 888 teachers, we would not be able to do that.

The next group has more than 1,000 people in it, and this group is instructional support for schools. Of these, 140 are ELL specialists, 370 are learning strategists, 346 are project facilitators, 84 are secondary librarians, and 162 have various jobs related to specific needs and directly related to schools where they provide support to teachers and to students. Some work in the central office and the Curriculum a Common Core State Standards.

The third group is made up of 992 nurses, counselors, psychologists, and social workers who are licensed personnel, but not directly assigned to classrooms.

The last group is the largest group of 2,865—the group we call special education, medically fragile. This is a huge number of teachers who are there through requirements that we meet either through the Individual Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), through students who have specific IEPs, or through the *Nevada Administrative Code* (NAC) or other related services we are required to provide to special populations.

We actually believe that last group will be impacted if, in fact, we end up with sequestration and budget cuts passed down to the district, because many of those are federally funded programs. If we lose that federal funding, we will either have to make some tough decisions about how we manage to keep in

alignment with federal law, or we will have to transfer money again from the general operating budget.

Finally, I would like to talk to you about what it would cost for us to restore our class sizes if we were to go back to the 2003 levels. I have worked for four superintendents now, and I remember when I worked for Brian Cram for a long period of time. He did not want to cut class sizes even in those days, although he did have to start increasing class sizes because it was the only way we could deal with the budget cuts. The reason no one ever wants to increase class sizes is because we have a track record that once you increase the class size, you never go back. It is a quick fix for a budget and a very difficult hole to dig yourself out of.

To restore standard class sizes for kindergarten through Grade 12 to their previous ratios, would cost \$95 million if every teacher needed was hired at the new teacher rate. That is probably an unrealistic expectation. The average rate of a teacher's salary is higher than that, so if you use the average salary rate, it would be \$121 million. If you did not go back and restore the class-size reduction to Grades 1, 2, and 3, that could be reduced to \$70 million for the new teacher rate, but it would be about \$96 million if you figured the average salary. Depending on what you wanted to do, just to get to the 2003 levels, it would be between \$70 million and \$121 million just for Clark County School District.

We spend a lot of time talking about those early grades, and I do remember when we were having the studies of what is the effective number, it had to be fewer than 18 students per class for Grades 1, 2, and 3 in order for essential learning in mathematics and reading skills to be effective. That is why we really tried to keep those numbers low in the early grades. The numbers differ dramatically when you get into secondary grades, but you will routinely hear from high school teachers that they have 35 to 40 students in their class. In talking to one high school teacher, they said this is no longer a matter of instruction and how we make sure our students receive the instruction they need; this is now a matter of safety. They were talking specifically about some of the very difficult tragedies we have dealt with that have taken place on school campuses. The fact is that when you have 40 children in your class, something can go wrong, and as one individual in that classroom, you may not be able to control the outcome. As we work to overcome bullying, and to make sure that every student is treated as an individual and has the attention that they deserve—specifically, as we work to make sure our students are safe—we cannot think that class size is a luxury. We really do have to think of this in terms of the basic needs of our students for safety as well as their education.

Assemblywoman Diaz:

You gave us a number for English language learner specialists and literacy specialists, and I know through budget cuts those positions were pretty much eliminated. I think there are more literacy specialists on site, but I think all of the ELL specialists were eliminated. I was wondering where that figure came from.

Joyce Haldeman:

Many of them were eliminated, but we still do have some ELL specialists. They are Title I specialists, and some of them are itinerant testers who do the testing of teachers in the different schools. We do have a number of people who are licensed staff devoted specifically to ELL tasks. I know that 100 sounds like a lot, but remember that we have 357 schools and they are dividing their work between those schools. The idea that there would be an ELL specialist at every school is not correct.

Assemblywoman Diaz:

Are you assured that the licensed staff is doing the testing? It is my understanding that the itinerant testers are non-licensed individuals, because I worked closely with them when I was one. They still do come to our sites, but I believe they are not licensed.

Joyce Haldeman:

I am happy to verify these numbers. I have in front of me a printout that is accurate as of February 13, and there are 81 Teaching English As a Second Language (TESL) endorsed elementary school positions and many of them do the testing. I believe they do have some unlicensed testers as well, but we do have a number of licensed testers that still exist.

Senator Cegavske:

I wanted to talk to you about the flexibility as I had talked to both of the previous sponsors of the bill. I do not remember what session it was, but there was a huge plea from Clark County School District especially, for the flexibility in class-size reduction that would go from kindergarten 2 through Grade 5 at the time. I know we have talked about K-12. Do you still feel that is a necessity for you to be able to do that, not only through each school district, but school by school?

Joyce Haldeman:

I knew that you would ask that question because you ask that question of me every year. You might remember that every year I gently give you the same answer. Actually, we have never requested that flexibility in Clark County.

The reason for that is because we are so afraid we will lose the ground that we gained in Grades 1, 2, and 3. The reason we submit waivers all the time for a variance from the class-size reduction is because the math does not always work out. We have always been concerned about Grades 4 and 5. The real plea for the flexibility came from the rural districts, and we heard that discussed earlier. Many of those requests came because they may have a grade level that only has 25 students total. They wanted the flexibility to divide their teachers up more effectively. The rural districts are the ones who always benefited the most from that flexibility. Frankly, we have always been afraid that if we asked you to let us do the division in an elementary school, we would even those classes out and never again get back to those smaller grade sizes that we think are beneficial to Grades 1, 2, and 3.

Lindsay Anderson, representing Washoe County School District:

In the spirit of not repeating what has already been said, certainly Washoe County School District agrees that every child is an individual, and we have talked extensively today about how every child comes ready for a different level. We feel that time is our most valuable resource, so we think that smaller class sizes allow us as teachers to give more individualized instruction in those early years. We know that is critical. We also cannot understate the new world we are living in, in terms of Common Core State Standards. That is something that has not really been addressed this afternoon. That will make a world of difference in the lower grades along with the new accountability framework. There are a lot of new expectations from teachers and students. We think that in order to get the student reading by third grade, it is important to give the teachers access to time for the students in the early grades.

Chairman Elliot Anderson:

Are there questions for Ms. Anderson? [There were none.]

Ryan Korn, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I am a kindergarten teacher at Myrtle Tate Elementary School in Las Vegas. Our school serves a high-minority, high-transiency, and high-ELL population. Nearly 100 percent of our students receive free or reduced lunch. To answer an earlier question, there are no instructional aides except for special education in any of our classrooms. As a kindergarten teacher, I feel lower class sizes are essential for high student achievement, but I am concerned about whether, and how, the lower ratios that would be required by this bill will actually be maintained.

Two years ago, I was teaching second grade. My class size never topped 20 students. This year, my class peaked at 34 kindergartners. Let me tell you

that when you are working with five-year-olds, that is a major difference for two reasons.

First, each student requires what I would call individual work, and the more students in the class, the more individual work a teacher must do. Some of this extra work, like grading papers or entering grades, can be annoying, but is not terribly onerous. On the contrary, some things, like classroom management, family engagement, small group intervention, and test administration, can be very onerous with those extra students. For example, in kindergarten we have the CCSD assessment which takes about 40 minutes to administer to each student and must be administered four times each year. We also have the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) ELL test, which is estimated to take about one hour per ELL student. Thus, each additional student we have can mean a loss of between three and four hours of instruction time per year. It is important to remember that not including breakfast, lunch, recess, and special events, there are fewer than five hours of instruction time each day in a full-day kindergarten. Obviously, there are even fewer in a half-day program. This says nothing about managing the activities of the other 33 students while you are performing that one-on-one testing.

Second, and I think more important, is that as the number of students increases it becomes more difficult to assess and respond to each student's participation and performance in a given instruction moment. For example, it is virtually impossible to simultaneously consult a phonemic awareness curriculum, emphasize and change certain sounds and words that you are saying, perform hand motions, and on top of that, scan 34 pairs of eyes and mouths for active participation, respond to nonparticipation and poor performance, and praise good performance. I have done what I could in that situation by seating very low-achieving and ELL students in one spot on the carpet so that I could quickly see how they were doing. Of course some children were pushed off the carpet because there was not enough room on the carpet. Even doing that and checking on the students who were most in need, I missed out on many other students who also deserved my attention. Seeing how students respond is especially important because phonemic awareness is the central prerequisite for reading. This is just one example of how student learning can be gravely affected, but it does apply to all subject areas.

My colleagues and I strive to deliver excellent instruction every day, but excellent instruction is compromised when so much additional time must be devoted to extra student's individual work. It is compromised when teachers cannot assess and respond to each student's participation in a given moment.

I also think excellent instruction is compromised when a student, just by virtue of having a high class size, cannot have their needs met.

On behalf of my colleagues at my school and throughout the Clark County School District, I would very much like to request that class sizes are kept reasonable so we can do the best teaching we can.

Ignacio Prado, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am currently a fourth-grade teacher, but I have taught lower grades here and on the east side of Las Vegas. I would also like to echo testimony and not be repetitive, but I am a person with a master's in education, and I believe that personal experience should also be tempered by research.

What we know about education is that smaller class sizes are good for children in the lower grades. Tiered instruction models rely on the excellence of a teacher who is holding 34 pairs of eyes, and sometimes between four and six pairs of eyes at a given time of what we call differentiated instruction. In very extreme cases, we use tier three instruction, which is highly intensive one-to-one or one-to-three instruction. What I have tried to do as a teacher in Clark County is to follow what the signs say, and also what I know gets results, in particular, in achievement across all grades. However, given larger class sizes, the effect is that it is not possible. I am simply out of minutes. As a personal anecdote, I take my responsibility to educate students very seriously. What this has meant is that I have to do what I can even outside of my instructional day.

Many times I have tutored students, sometimes through programs that my school has been able to offer, but often through my own good will and voluntary services, which I was happy to give. Even then, the time was not enough given the constraints of the schedules of some of the parents, especially given the fact that I do teach at an at-risk school. Even when I have offered opportunities outside of the instructional day, students could not come for that additional time.

I believe many of these things would be addressed if we kept the averages low and in particular for us, because we do live in a densely populated area. If we use a district average, in some cases the numbers do balloon well into the 20s in the lower grades, whereas this might not be the case in other less densely populated areas.

Chairman Elliot Anderson:

I want to thank both you and Mr. Korn for testifying after teaching such a long day. Do we have any questions for Mr. Prado? [There were none.]

David Blodgett, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I will be very brief because much of what I prepared to say has been said in the nuanced discussion of the bill and by the other teachers who are here.

I initially signed up to speak in favor of the bill because it says it statutorily increases the prescribed 18-to-1 ratio, and for 20-to-1 ratio. Having experience in classrooms, I realize that, while that it says it is increasing the ratios, it would actually be a much more desirable situation for most of the teachers who have classes much larger than that now. If that is the new prescribed ratio, and that was something we could actually do, I would not have a problem with that.

While we have talked about how research on class size is mixed, research is fairly unanimous that teacher quality is very important. I support, in principle, increasing the prescribed ratios. When that is happening, we must also make sure we focus on the more important questions of how we get more students in front of the most effective teachers and how we provide teachers with the resources and support they need to be able to meet the needs of those children, especially in classes with the higher ratio.

John Ellsworth, representing Parent Leaders for Education, Reno, Nevada:

One of our members, Leslie Gilkey, was scheduled to read her testimony today. She had to leave and asked if I would read it for her. Is that allowed?

Chairman Elliot Anderson:

What we could do is register your support, as we do have you on the record as support. You can submit testimony after if you would like. Would that work for you, sir?

John Ellsworth:

That is fine. We strongly support this bill. [Submitted written testimony on behalf of Leslie Gilkey ([Exhibit M](#)).]

Natha Anderson, Private Citizen, Washoe County, Nevada:

I am a teacher in Washoe County and today I am representing the Washoe Education Association, as well as the Nevada State Education Association with Craig Stevens.

I am in support of class-size reduction. I am a high school teacher so it is difficult for me to talk about the elementary schools, although I can see a difference in my students when they are in smaller class sizes.

As a sophomore Honors English teacher, when my students have had a smaller class size from first, second, and third grade, 90 percent of the time they have been reading at grade level or above. At the higher level, it makes a huge difference for me as a teacher. I am then able to work with my students even though I do have those 37- or 38-student classes.

Today I would like to ask for a stronger accountability when it has to do with the teacher-to-student ratio. As a high school teacher when it says our ratio is 38- or 39-to-1, that is not accurate. In Washoe County our physical education classes currently are built 56-to-1 ratio, at least at my school site. It was built that way on purpose. Our senior English classes are built, on purpose, with 42-to-1 ratio. That way, our freshman English classes, where we find that most of our students struggle are 26-to-1 ratio. We are just asking for it to be a little more accurate. It is honest with the average, but it would be better to truly state that our senior English classes are this size, and our senior government classes are this size, because currently, our parents do not know that. When we give them the average, it sounds great. The reality is not there.

Chairman Elliot Anderson:

I would like to offer a quick note that I would be remiss if I did not mention that Ms. Anderson is the daughter of former Assemblyman Anderson, the always Senior Anderson from District 31 in Sparks. We are glad to have you.

Craig Stevens, representing Nevada State Education Association:

The only reason I am up here is that I did provide testimony for another member, Rachel Neel, a second grade teacher here in Carson City ([Exhibit N](#)). It was given to the Committee and hopefully it will be provided to you so you can see what she has to say about class size.

Marlene Lockard, representing Nevada Women's Lobby, Reno, Nevada:

For all of the reasons stated, we strongly support this bill.

Dottie Merrill, representing Nevada Association of School Boards:

My testimony has been provided online on NELIS ([Exhibit O](#)). I would just say that the School Board Association supports this bill. In our testimony we have some questions and concerns, so we would look forward to working to address those concerns.

Dale Norton, Superintendent, Nye County School District:

I am a member of the Nevada Association of Superintendents, the Acting President of the Nevada Association of School Administrators, and I am also a Teachers and Leaders Council (TLC) member.

The Nye County School District supports A.B. 162, class-size reduction, but has a high interest and concern regarding the fiscal impact of this bill that will be addressed by the Joint Committee members at a later time.

Jeremy Parnes, Private Citizen, Clark County, Nevada:

I am an English teacher at Cimarron-Memorial High School in the Clark County School District. I am supporting A.B. 162, but I do not see it going far enough.

Chairman Elliot Anderson:

Mr. Parnes, if you are going to say that, I cannot keep you in support. Would you be willing to talk to the bill's sponsor about that off the record? I have to keep you clear for the record if you support the bill as written, or not.

Jeremy Parnes:

Would I then switch to "no?"

Chairman Elliot Anderson:

That is correct, Mr. Parnes. Our rules are new this session, but go ahead and proceed.

Jeremy Parnes:

I feel that class-size reduction should go from K-12 and there should be provisions for overcrowded schools to not just report high pupil-to-teacher ratios, but to hire additional teachers to offset those numbers. I am unclear why this issue needs to be discussed over and over again. The only people who claim class size does not matter are the ones who went to private schools where the class size was anywhere from 10 to 15.

There have been many studies that have shown the lower the numbers, the more learning takes place. If that is not a practical enough reason, how about the fire inspectors periodically telling us our classrooms are way over capacity, thus causing a fire hazard?

The only discussion I see for this issue is the clarification of what the term "large class size" actually means. According to the 2011-2012 accountability reports for CCSD, the average class sizes were: English, 24 students per classroom; mathematics, 25 students per classroom; and science and social

studies both had 27 students per classroom. Numbers like these are totally inaccurate and viciously misleading. They are not just an average of all classes in the district, but a comparison to all teachers as well. The self-contained special education classes actually average about 12 students total. If you add the 38 students in my fourth period with one of those classes, and average it to two teachers, it does not take a math teacher to realize it looks like I have an easy class load of 25 students. Averaging all of the overcrowded classrooms with all self-contained special education classes will deflate the sizes and give the illusion of lower class sizes.

As Ms. Haldeman said, another thing that compounds that illusion is when the district lists people as teachers who have no classes to teach or students to supervise. Sometimes schools are forced to list jobs like ELL specialists, librarians, or school electronics computer specialists as teaching positions, yet they have no students.

Then there is what used to be called teacher advisors, or some other fake title. These teachers were paid to wander around the district observing teachers, but never taught. Every time this was made public, their job titles were changed, but their job description stayed the same. They collect a paycheck as a teacher, but help no students.

Throughout the year, I average about 200 students total, a far cry from the claim of 120. There is not enough time in the day or year to grade enough, teach enough, or interact enough with that many students.

When I first started teaching in Nevada, I used to complain to my parents about the overcrowding of our classes. Being high school teachers in Michigan, they would tell me that was just one of the usual problems with public education, and they dealt with it, too. It took a number of years before I made it clear to them what I meant by overcrowded classrooms. In a typical first quarter of our year, my classes would be packed with approximately 40 to 45 students. As the term progressed, my class size might lower to 38 to 40 students. On a good year, my average class size was 35.

When my parents heard these numbers they were stunned. My mom informed me that the Michigan Teacher's Union would actually intervene if their class sizes went above 25. What do you expect from a state that ranks around fifteenth in pupil expenditures, compared to Nevada's usual forty-second rank?

We are the fifth largest district in the nation, but consistently at the bottom for most positive things in education.

Chairman Elliot Anderson:

Would it be fair to say you support, you just wanted to go farther? Would that be an adequate characterization?

Jeremy Parnes:

Yes, with the caveats.

Nathan Warner, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am a fourth-grade elementary school teacher in a Title I school. I am also an alumnus of Teach for America which the Governor spoke approvingly of in his State of the State Address.

So far, class-size reduction has not affected me. I support many of the points raised earlier, and I support this bill. However, I do have a couple of concerns. One is that of accountability and how this will actually change.

Ms. Haldeman said we need to be getting back to reasonable class sizes and we have already made headway in class-size reduction with the first bill in 2003. I have yet to see one class in my school or anywhere else where the class size is actually what the law currently states it should be. I have stated before, that is a concern, and one that I do not think has been adequately addressed.

I would like to emphasize that limited class sizes, apart from how they impact or improve academic achievement, are important to meet the basic needs of our students. In my class, for example, 90 percent qualify for free or reduced-price lunch and the majority of them are Hispanic. Their parents work very hard, but I do not believe any of them have college degrees. They work hard in casinos, as janitors, and elsewhere, and many of them are undocumented immigrants. To keep their children engaged in school and able to focus in classes is a continuing challenge.

I recall one student who put her head down all day because she had dental pain and her family did not have access to a dentist. I helped find a dentist to take her case for free, but then they could not go alone, because the parents did not speak English. I speak Spanish so that puts me in a position where I have to translate to speak to my own students' parents, but translate for other teachers so they can adequately speak to their students' parents. That creates a huge barrier and takes up so much time, not just for my class but for their classes as well.

Some will say those are not my professional responsibilities and it is beyond my job description. I would say I have a moral, ethical obligation, an imperative to

perform those tasks, and having 31 students in my class this year makes it extremely difficult.

This is my third year teaching. My first and second years, I had 24 to 25 students. This year I have 31, partly due to eliminated positions in CCSD. Seven more students is an extra reading group that I will not get to meet with every week. That is seven more phone calls, seven more sets of guardians, as Mr. Korn says, seven more pairs of eyes that I have to keep an eye on. It is a whole row added on to the back of my classroom. I can no longer call my students back to the back carpet for a reading week test this week.

I support the bill. I would encourage the Committee and the State Legislature to find ways to help districts actually make sure that it happens. [Submitted additional testimony ([Exhibit P](#)).]

Chairman Elliot Anderson:

Thank you for your testimony, Mr. Warner, and let me say thank you on behalf of the entire Joint Committee for your dedication and going above and beyond. Everyone here appreciates that.

Leticia Shaffer, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I represent the United Kindergarten Teachers of Las Vegas. When I started here 12 years ago, I was a first-grade teacher and at that time I had 16 students in my class. Now that I am teaching kindergarten, and we have implemented the Common Core State Standards, I am now teaching my kindergartners what I used to teach my first graders. The only difference is I now have 30 kindergartners. I am in an all-day program, but again, it is hard to get to all of those students. Kindergarten is such an important grade for children. When we have children coming in at four years old who have never been away from their parents, who have very little experience, it is very tough to get them where they need to be when you have that many. Someone is always going to be neglected in the classroom and usually it is the brighter students who are neglected. We do not have the time to give them that one-on-one instruction that they need because we are so focused on those children who are really low-achieving. Again, we as kindergarten teachers do not get that extra help until our classes hit 42 students. When we say 42 students, it has to be 42 students for six weeks and every kindergarten class has to be at 42.

At my school there is a kindergarten class we call "special K." The most they can have in their class is 14 children. They would be averaged with us, so, again, they would stay at 14, but we would have to go higher than that to supplement the numbers.

Chairman Elliot Anderson:

Ms. Shaffer, do you have your testimony in written form?

Leticia Shaffer:

There are three of us, including Janet Merkle speaking to Robin Vircsik's paper.

Chairman Elliot Anderson:

For the sake of time, could I convince you to give that to my committee manager, Andrew Diss, and we will make sure it is included into the record?

Leticia Shaffer:

We do want to propose some amendments to this bill regarding the reporting of the numbers. [Submitted written testimony ([Exhibit Q](#)).]

Chairman Elliot Anderson:

If you do want an amendment, I will have to ask you to sign in under the neutral category or opposing category. We have to keep the record clear.

Janet Merkle, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am a kindergarten teacher in the CCSD. I am in support of A.B. 162 for class-size reduction. I am also a member of the United Kindergarten Teachers of Las Vegas and we have submitted some surveys since May 2008 through January 2013 to you, but would like to introduce them to you. [Read survey questions ([Exhibit R](#)).]

Chairman Elliot Anderson:

I need to ask you to stay with the bill. We spoke about full-day kindergarten yesterday. Do you have any comments on the bill as written?

Janet Merkle:

We interviewed the teachers regarding the class sizes and we found that 87 percent of the kindergarten classes have only one adult in the room. We would like kindergarten to be included in class-size reduction because we are now teaching first-grade curriculum. In the classes with 30 or more students, 87 percent of these classrooms have no aides. Studies have shown that the most effective class size is 18. Kindergarten teachers surveyed supported a minimum of 17 students with a maximum of 20 as our recommended class size.

Adam Berger, Private Citizen, Henderson, Nevada:

I am a special education teacher in CCSD. I have a daughter in Bass Elementary School and I can say that it is 18-to-1 ratio in first grade and my daughter's class is 23-to-1 ratio.

The Institute of Education Sciences, the research arm of the U.S. Department of Education, concludes that class-size reduction is one of only four evidence-based reforms that have been proven to increase student achievement through rigorous, randomized experiments—the “Gold Standard” of research.

Studies from Tennessee, Wisconsin, and elsewhere demonstrate that students who are assigned to smaller classes in kindergarten through third grade, do better in every way that can be measured: they score higher on tests, receive better grades, and exhibit improved attendance.

National surveys of educators believe that class-size reduction is the most effective method to improve the quality of teaching. In a 2008 survey, 76 percent of first-year teachers said that reducing class size would be a very effective way of improving teacher quality, and 21 percent responded that it would be an effective method, for a total of 97 percent, far outstripping every other reform.

In the Clark County School District, schools are staffed at 93 percent. What does that mean? Out of every 100 students, 7 are not staffed for. What are we doing with those seven students? We are either leaving them far behind or putting them with those classes. I support A.B. 162.

Gonzalo Cisneros, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am a parent of a seven-year old and a five-year old. I am a business owner and I am actually in that first percentile. I do support A.B. 162 for every child out there who is not receiving the proper education. My daughter as a first grader is reading at the fifth-grade level. Yet she is going to a public school every morning stating that she is not happy, is bored, and does not want to go to school because the teachers cannot give her the time she needs. I have considered putting her into private school and I could do that, but I have chosen to pay the high taxes to have you help everybody else that needs the proper education instead of putting that money toward a private school and writing it off at the end of the year.

That being said, first of all, I know you are all busy. All of us have valuable time, so I would appreciate that all of you out there actually listen to what I have to say. It really does make sense if you look at the big picture and put

common sense to it. Look at the debt we owe to China, how all of these other countries' children are smarter than ours. We are supposed to be the superior power, but yet what are we doing? Our children are trusting us, just like when we hold their hand when crossing the street. They are trusting us and you in Carson City to make the right decisions.

When we say education is not important, we need to figure out what to do as a team. If we do not figure out how to solve this, when we are in old-age homes, we are going to be signing our papers in Japanese and Chinese.

Chairman Elliot Anderson:

Mr. Cisneros, I have to try to keep this on class-size reduction.

Gonzalo Cisneros:

I support A.B. 162, and it cannot be taken as something where we turn our head the other way. We need to focus and figure out how to solve this. Overall, education is really where we need to put those dollars.

Angie Sullivan, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am a classroom teacher. I am an advocate for the disadvantaged and the poverty students and students who may have special needs. Research shows that when you have students who need support, they are just going to fall behind if we do not give them that support. Our district is way behind. I see students who come to school who have never been in school before and they are two or three years behind already. If they are not caught up in the early grades, and without appropriate class size, and with teachers who do not have the supplies to do the job, we are going to continue to fail students. We are failing an abnormal number of English language learner children, minority students, and poverty students. One way to address that in Nevada, for more equity and fairness, is class-size reduction, so each of those students can have more individual attention.

**Vicenta Montoya, representing Si Se Puede Latino Democratic Caucus,
Las Vegas, Nevada:**

I support the bill for all of the reasons that have been previously stated. I also think that the testimony given before mine indicates, with respect to class-size reduction, there has been juggling of the numbers in order to receive a particular average. It does not accurately reflect what the class size is. I am glad there are changes to the law based on reporting, and we will see a more honest reporting of actual class size.

Chairman Elliot Anderson:

Are there any questions for Ms. Montoya? [There were none.] Do we have other support in Las Vegas? [There was none.] We will move to opposition in Carson City. [There was none.] We will move to opposition in Las Vegas. [There was none.] We will move to neutral in Carson City or Las Vegas.

Robin Vircsik, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I signed in as neutral. I teach kindergarten and this is my twenty-second year of teaching. I have had the opportunity to study education in Sweden and New Zealand.

I represent a group of kindergarten teachers called the United Kindergarten Teachers of Las Vegas. We are a group of 131 Clark County kindergarten teachers. We researched the kindergarten size in the top ten performing countries in the world ([Exhibit Q](#)). On the low side it is 12-to-1 ratio, on the high side it is 19-to-1 ratio.

We are also concerned regarding the reporting of class size. If you would refer to your bill, page 3, line 1, where it says "An identification of each elementary school in the school district, if any . . . ," we thought you needed to add "and the grade levels." There is a position in the district called "coaches" and they walk around and observe people. They are not allowed to work with children although these are certified teachers. Let us say my school has three coaches and administration would like to keep them there for whatever reason and not apply for a variance. If I am not sure the administrator has really gotten a variance for my specific grade level, then the grade level would need to be posted on the website. That would aid in accurate reporting.

On page 3, if you could, insert between lines 5 and 6 that, "Each school district is responsible for developing and publishing a complaint process by which teacher concerns regarding the misreporting of class size and teacher assignments will be addressed."

On page 3, if you could, insert "coaches" on line 23 where you have lots of categories of nonessential personnel listed.

On page 3, after line 23, if you could, add "School districts are responsible for publishing the total number of licensed administrators not assigned to a school, and the total number of licensed teachers not assigned to both the school and a classroom with a roster of students for which they are responsible."

Chairman Elliot Anderson:

Our rules now require that we do have these discussions in the neutral category. Do we have any questions for this witness? [There were none.]

Lonnie Shields, representing Nevada Association of School Administrators:

I want it very clear that the Nevada Association of School Administrators wholeheartedly supports class-size reduction. However, I have also been directed that any time it comes up in a bill there would be further reporting duty by principals that I bring it to your attention. That is what I am doing tonight. This would result in three more reports being sent to the head office by the school principal and it would take time away, again, from their duties of observing and hiring teachers and dealing with students. However, if in your wisdom, this is necessary to bring about class-size reduction, we will do it.

Senator Cegavske:

Would you include in that report how many substitute teachers you have, long-term and short-term, in every classroom? You do not do that now. I am just making the suggestion because that is one of the issues we have that we need to keep a record of, and we have not done that yet.

Lonnie Shields:

We will include in any report what we are required to report by our bosses.

Chairman Elliot Anderson:

Are there any further questions? [There were none.] I will close the hearing. Do we have any public comment? Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick, would you like to have any last words? I am going to reopen the hearing.

Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick:

Thank you for putting the extra time in to have the discussion. I think it is important, and I hope we will work together in a bipartisan fashion to get to the crux of class size and the importance of it for the long-term. I will look through the amendments, but I ask each and every Committee member to stop by my office and give me some input on the ratio, because I think we need to collectively talk about that.

Senator Debbie Smith:

I just want to close by saying thank you for listening to this discussion. This is really important. One of the more important things we will talk about in education is the number of children who are in the classroom.

I want to go back to what Assemblywoman Diaz said about the number of students she had in her class that I want you to think about. If you have not volunteered in a classroom and are not familiar with what that feels like, surely you have been a scout or 4-H leader, or a volunteer in some realm where you have had a group of children who you are responsible for. I want you to think about having 15 or 16 little Boy Scouts versus 30, or 30 4-H children who you are trying to manage for a couple of hours, with you alone managing that group. Think about that in a classroom and what a huge difference it makes and what a huge difference it will make for our children.

Chairman Elliot Anderson:

I will now close the hearing on Assembly Bill 162 and open up the microphones for public comment either in Carson City or in Las Vegas. [There was none.]

The meeting is adjourned [at 7:04 p.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Sharon McCallen
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Assemblyman Elliot T. Anderson, Chairman

DATE: _____

Senator Joyce Woodhouse, Chairman

DATE: _____

EXHIBITS

Committee Name: Committee on Education

Date: February 27, 2013

Time of Meeting: 3:31 p.m.

Bill	Exhibit	Witness / Agency	Description
	A		Agenda
	B		Attendance Roster
A.B. 161	C	Assemblyman Elliot Anderson	Presentation
A.B. 161	D	Assemblyman Elliot Anderson	Double Jeopardy Report
A.B. 161	E	Assemblyman Elliot Anderson	Summer Learning-White Paper
A.B. 161	F	Lindsay Anderson, representing Washoe County School District	Testimony
A.B. 161	G	Ellen Holmes, representing Clark County Education Association	Testimony
A.B. 161	H	Dotty Merrill, representing Nevada Association of School Boards	Testimony
A.B. 161	I	John Ellsworth, representing Parent Leaders for Education, Reno, Nevada	Testimony
A.B. 162	J	Assemblywoman Marilyn Kirkpatrick, Clark County Assembly District No. 1	Testimony
A.B. 162	K	Assemblywoman Marilyn Kirkpatrick, Clark County Assembly District No. 1	Proposed Amendment
A.B. 162	L	Joyce Haldeman, representing Clark County School District	Historical Class Size FY2003-2013 Chart
A.B. 162	M	Leslie Gilkey (Submitted by John Ellsworth)	Testimony
A.B. 162	N	Rachel Neal (Submitted by Craig Stevens)	Testimony
A.B. 162	O	Dotty Merrill, representing Nevada Association of School Boards	Testimony
A.B. 162	P	Nathan Warner, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada	Testimony

A.B. 162	Q	Leticia Schaffer, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada	Testimony
A.B. 162	R	Janet Merkle, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada	Survey Questions