

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
AND
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
SUBCOMMITTEES ON K-12/HIGHER EDUCATION/CIPS**

**Seventy-Eighth Session
March 17, 2015**

The meeting of the Subcommittees on K-12/Higher Education/CIPS of the Senate Committee on Finance and the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means was called to order by Chair Ben Kieckhefer at 8:02 a.m. on Tuesday, March 17, 2015, in Room 3137 of the Legislative Building, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4412E of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. [Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda. [Exhibit B](#) is the Attendance Roster. All exhibits are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

SENATE SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Ben Kieckhefer, Chair
Senator Michael Roberson
Senator Joyce Woodhouse

ASSEMBLY SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Assemblyman Pat Hickey, Chair
Assemblyman Derek W. Armstrong, Vice Chair
Assemblyman D. Paul Anderson
Assemblywoman Teresa Benitez-Thompson
Assemblywoman Marilyn Kirkpatrick
Assemblyman Randy Kirner
Assemblyman James Oscarson
Assemblywoman Heidi Swank

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alex Haartz, Deputy Fiscal Analyst
Cindy Jones, Assembly Fiscal Analyst
Andrea McCalla, Program Analyst

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Emily Cervi, Committee Assistant
Jason Gortari, Committee Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT:

Dale Erquiaga, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education
Dena Durish, Director of Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement,
Department of Education
Mindy Martini, Deputy Superintendent for Business and Support Services,
Department of Education
Patrick Gavin, Director, State Public Charter School Authority, Department of
Education
Jessica Hoban, Administrative Services Officer, State Public Charter School
Authority, Department of Education
Victoria Carreón, Guinn Center for Policy Priorities
Margaret Martini
John Eppolito

Chair Kieckhefer:

I will open the hearing on budgets for the Department of Education (NDE).

Dale Erquiaga (Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education):

Today we will be covering the other half of the NDE's budget within my PowerPoint presentation entitled "The Executive Budget — Department of Education: 2015-2017 Biennium" ([Exhibit C](#)).

Page 4 of [Exhibit C](#) provides the NDE's current organizational chart. The Student Achievement Division is the largest Division within the NDE. Our new office, the Office of Safe and Respectful Learning, is being moved from the Student Achievement Division into the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The only office left in the Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement Division is the Office of Educator Licensure.

Page 5 highlights the 24 new positions open at the NDE. Fourteen of those positions are related to the expansion of the NDE and the increase in educational spending. The others are from the original agency request.

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Mindy Martini has provided you with a handout entitled “Nevada Department of Education New Positions by Program Total: 24 New Positions” ([Exhibit D](#)). Pages 1 and 2 of [Exhibit D](#) provide the specific details requested by the Subcommittees. The information consists of the name of the program; its associated area of funding, and whether or not the program distributes money to schools; and the new staff positions that are being created. We are still preparing a spreadsheet timeline of the grants, contracts and per-pupil distribution for each of programs.

Dena Durish (Director of Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement, Department of Education):

There is one remaining budget left to be discussed within the Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement Division, budget account (B/A) 101-2705, Educator Licensure.

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NDE - Educator Licensure — Budget Page K-12 EDUCATION-98 (Volume I)
Budget Account 101-2705

Page 8 of [Exhibit C](#) provides the Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement Division’s current organizational chart. The Office of Educator Licensure was originally named the Office of Teacher Licensure. All of the materials and Web sites were marked as being from the Office of Teacher Licensure because that office primarily represented teachers. Renaming this office was necessary because it also represents administrators, school nurses, guidance counselors, and other types of educational personnel.

Page 10 provides a description of B/A 101-2705. This budget also includes the Commission on Professional Standards in Education. This Commission sets regulations for licensure requirements, course work and testing. Regulations are also set for initial licensure, renewal and continuing education. The majority of staff is in Las Vegas and the Carson City Office is fully staffed as well.

Page 11 of [Exhibit C](#) discusses our performance measure for B/A 101-2705. Last Session, we received a Legislative Letter of Intent related to our customer service and processing times. We provided the responses we have received throughout the year from surveys of the quality in these categories and provided them in the Letter of Intent.

We have taken several steps to improve customer service and processing times. The largest step we took was hiring a licensure program officer. Our customer service survey one and a half years ago was quite dismal. We had an initial bench mark and improved to an 81 percent positive customer service experience in FY 2014. Our goal by FY 2017 is to report a 90 percent positive customer service satisfaction rate by our applicants that visit, call or interact with our Office. We are tracking and measuring that rate on a daily basis.

Page 12 of [Exhibit C](#) discusses enhancement unit E-238, a request for a new phone system in our Las Vegas office. The phone system we have is not in alignment with the other State agencies, nor is it aligned with other NDE offices located in northern Nevada. This enhancement will modernize the information technology (IT) side of our phones. Improvements in voice mail routing, messaging and other IT components will enhance our customer service. A new phone system is a key component to reaching our 90 percent positive customer service satisfaction performance measure goal.

E-238 Efficient and Responsive State Government — Page K-12
EDUCATION-100

Student enrollment counts and staff numbers at the NDE are increasing statewide. This has resulted in the staff numbers in the Office of Educator Licensure outgrowing our office resources in the southern Nevada office location. Housing additional staff from other NDE divisions has added to our capacity problem. Since there are no phone lines to accommodate the growth of our staff in the southern Nevada office, this enhancement is necessary.

Page 13 discusses enhancement unit E-241, a request to fund a licensure study in fiscal year (FY) 2017. The NDE has found there is not a cohesive alignment between *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) 391 and *Nevada Administrative Code* (NAC) 391, which both govern educational personnel. Oftentimes, there is a

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disconnect between these two regulations. Regulations are sometimes translated differently and different pieces are enacted by the Commission on Professional Standards in Education. Oftentimes, changes are made in one place of the NAC and are not changed in other places of the NRS. Legislative intent is not always interpreted correctly between these two regulatory bodies.

E-241 Efficient and Responsive State Government — Page K-12
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After revisiting these statutes, we realized components of the policies and procedures have not been revised since the late 1980s and early 1990s. Requirements for educational personnel are continuously increasing in rigor and accountability. We want to perform a large, comprehensive study rather than take this piece-by-piece back to the Commission to adjust them.

Chair Kieckhefer:

How did you reach the \$60,000 cost for E-241?

Ms. Durish:

We have talked with other state agencies across the Country who have conducted similar studies. Some of these agencies hired private contractors and others hired nonprofits, so we have only been able to reach an estimate.

Chair Kieckhefer:

Do you feel comfortable that this study will not exceed this amount requested?

Ms. Durish:

I am quite certain it will not exceed \$60,000.

Page 15 of [Exhibit C](#) discusses enhancement unit E-550, the Statewide Educator Licensure System technical investment. This technology upgrade will improve our customer service, accountability, conversations and tracking.

E-550 Technology Investment Request — Page K-12 EDUCATION-101

Currently we do not have the ability to accept online applications, making all required applications be submitted by paper. Paper applications require our staff

to enter all the data in the application fields by hand. Time and staffing issues are created, along with the opportunity for data entry errors.

This technology upgrade would give us a system where applicants could apply online and attach their supporting documents. This digital application process would increase the overall efficiency of the Office. In addition, our payment process would be enhanced. We currently do not have a system capable of accepting credit cards, debit cards, or electronic fund transfers. We are only able to accept money orders and cashier's checks as forms of payments.

This technology upgrade would also speed up the results of our electronic fingerprint background checks. We currently process fingerprints with the Department of Public Safety (DPS) using fingerprinting cards. Every licensee applicant needs to bring the physical fingerprint card into our Office. Our current system does not allow us to share electronic information with the DPS's electronic system. This upgrade would enable us to receive fingerprint reports from DPS electronically and make our background checks much quicker.

Another piece of information we receive from DPS is our competency testing results. All candidates of the Office of Educator Licensure are required to pass certain areas of competency. We are capable of receiving automatic uploads of competency tests from DPS, but at times, our current system and the DPS system exhibit technical difficulties. The new system would be able to enhance the uploads between our agencies.

Interfacing with Infinite Campus and district records would also be enhanced. We look at teacher performance records and salary levels as part of our federal and State accountability reporting requirements. This evaluation is currently done by manual back-and-forth transactions with the districts. The new system would merge the multiple sources of required information from databases more easily.

Additional benefits of the new system would be that imaging systems and data backup would be enhanced and manpower would be saved if applicants could scan their initial required documents.

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Although this enhancement is a large technology investment, it will enhance several areas of the Department.

Assemblyman Armstrong:

Have you looked at other states' proposals for this enhancement unit and for a template of the integration of this technology improvement?

Ms. Durish:

Page 16 of [Exhibit C](#) discusses how this request mirrors the existing State system. We have met with one vendor that has existing contracts with the Department of Business and Industry and with the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation. We have talked with these State agencies about piggybacking a new system on top of what we already have statewide.

Page 19 discusses our efforts to reach out to other states for input. We sent a survey to the other 49 state directors of educator licensure agencies. We received results back from 24 different states. They provided us information on their licensure application system. Based on that information, we released a Request for Information (RFI) on March 6, 2015. We requested information for data regarding the costs to implement the system and the types of technology components required. We are compiling those results and have only received about 10 RFI proposals back. We are currently working with staff to come up with a good estimate of the costs moving forward based on those proposals. The figures in front of you today are based on the initial conversations that we had with the other states. We are now in the process of getting more specific on the cost components as we receive more data.

Chair Kieckhefer:

Based on the results and responses you received from the RFIs, do you think that you we will have to adjust these budget amounts?

Ms. Durish:

That is something we may need to do. The RFI is just basic information. As we are reviewing those responses, we are finding that we may need to install this enhancement in a phased implementation process.

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Page 17 of [Exhibit C](#) provides a timeline of the costs for a Statewide Educator Licensure System. Looking at FY 2016, FY 2017, FY 2018 and beyond to FY 2019 and FY 2020, we found that there are some aspects of this we thought could be accomplished using a phased implementation process. Based on the RFIs we are receiving back, the vendors are not agreeing with some of those costs in the earlier years. The vendors think the programming costs may need to be paid upfront, so we may need to shift some of our cost projections into FYs 2016 and 2017. We soon hope to have some of those answers in working with staff.

Chair Kieckhefer:

I would appreciate that. We want to ensure you get it right.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:

During the interim, will the goal of the study requested in E-241 be to analyze each specific part of licensure covered under NRS 391 and NAC 391 to devise a better plan on how to make those two regulations more cohesive?

Ms. Durish:

Yes. The intent would be to look at all the pieces of NRS 391 and NAC 391. They are comprehensive chapters and we have found some levels of disconnect.

For example, there are 13 disability categories in the field of special education. Over the years, people have requested changes by the Commission on professional standards for teachers who teach students with autism and intellectual disabilities. The changes requested were made in those 2 disability categories and should have been made in the 11 other disability categories too. Oftentimes, the disconnection between NRS 391 and NAC 391 results in changes not being made to all disability categories.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:

I am curious about your sense of priorities, because I cannot imagine that every subcategory of NRS 391 and NAC 391 will be equally addressed. Both NRS 391 and NAC 391 are large and have various items that fall under them. It sounds like alternate licensing for teachers and special education will be the major focus.

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For the record, "I just want to put in a quick plug for 391.160 because I have a speech pathology bill and I have heard from them adamantly throughout this Session that they would love to address some of the their exemptions that exist in 391 and such so."

Mr. Erquiaga:

Page 22 of [Exhibit C](#) displays the Student Achievement Division's organizational chart. This Division determines what students should know and should be able to do. This Division also applies technical assistance to varying programs or age groups and creates reports on accountability information that is available to the community.

We will now discuss the Office of Standards and Instructional Support within the Student Achievement Division. Page 24 of [Exhibit C](#) provides a description of B/A 101-2675. This Office is responsible for setting education standards statewide.

NDE - Standards and Instructional Support — Budget Page K-12 EDUCATION-74
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Budget Account 101-2675

Page 25 of [Exhibit C](#) discusses the standards-based education system in the State. Originally, the State established standards and instructional order by adopting textbooks. In 1996, we moved to a standards-based system. This Office and the Council to Establish Academic Standards for Public Schools establish and adopt academic standards. Once standards are adopted, this Office has the responsibility of communicating with the districts and charter schools about how the standards are to be applied.

This is a circular system. Curriculums and lesson plans are developed at the school district or charter school level by local boards. Their textbooks are then selected at the local level, but approved by the State Board of Education (SBE).

Page 26 of [Exhibit C](#) discusses the performance measure for B/A 101-2675, all school districts reporting full implementation of the Nevada Academic Content Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics. The SBE adopts these standards, but the boards of trustees have the statutory responsibility to carry

out implementation. Implementation consists of curriculum design, professional development for teachers and student instruction. Last year, we created a survey to determine the level of implementation. The figure derived from the survey's results will be a benchmark for us moving forward.

Page 27 discusses enhancement E-281, a request for a technology program. The Office of Standards and Instructional Support also supports the NDE's instructional technology. In previous hearings we have talked about the Governor Brian Sandoval's proposed Nevada Ready 21 (NR21) technology plan. This program, planned to be rolled out over three biennia, is an infusion of technology into middle schools and high schools throughout the State.

E-281 Educated and Healthy Citizenry — Page K-12 EDUCATION-74

Other budget accounts include implementation dollars for this plan, the monies that would be distributed on a statewide basis, school by school. This budget enhancement funds the backbone support in our Department. The Nevada Broadband Task Force recommended that we hire staff for this program, but we have elected to hire consultants instead. Staff would become permanently embedded in the Base Budget and a contractor would not. At some point, this program will end and dismissing people from the Base Budget when they are working on a grant is never a comfortable thing in State government.

Enhancement unit E-281 will embed a contract system for this program. We will work with Maine's Department of Education and the One-to-One Institute for assistance with contract negotiations and program mentoring. These entities will help us roll out this program in the first year by mentoring the instructors. Before the devices are chosen by that school and delivered, they will work with the instructional staff.

Last week, I visited Sparks Middle School and observed their One-to-One environment. The teachers there said the first year of their One-to-One program was focused on changing instruction and adapting to the technology. They also said that, during the first year, students would often help teachers with the use of technology. Their environment is the exact type of environment we would create through NR21. This enhancement unit is tied to that larger grant program in a separate budget account that requests \$24.2 million in each fiscal year. If

the larger grant program request is not funded, this enhancement unit would not be funded either.

Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick:

How will the consultant help with contract negotiations and how was the amount of payment derived?

Mr. Erquiaga:

The NR21 was designed by a Task Force that started about a year ago. The program's \$50 million would be administered by the Nevada Commission on Educational Technology (CET), which is an existing statutory body that has distributed technology to schools for 20 years. The NR21 needs to design contracts based on the kind of technology devices selected. We are at the point of selecting a device based on a Request for Proposal (RFP). The CET will decide on the combination of devices and vendors that will be used. The contractor is responsible for helping the CET set the parameters for the devices and vendors used.

As each school applies, they would negotiate the terms of the contract and how the program would be delivered in their school. Once a contract is approved, the CET would disburse the grant to the school that would then have to enter into their own contracts for the purchase of maintenance for the devices. At that point in the process, we would work with the consultants from Maine to help with the implementation process.

The CET is required to use a third-party evaluator to create a report on the effectiveness of the technology grant each fiscal year, which we would provide to the Legislature.

Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick:

Will this request exceed the funding requested? I do not want to have to go to the Interim Finance Committee (IFC) because we get our RFP back and find out the request is not large enough.

Mr. Erquiaga:

The contracts are dollar based. When a school applies they will have a detailed report on exactly what it is they will purchase and the maximum funding

amount. The Task Force did a good job of identifying a per-pupil cost. We can project what the upper-end cost will be. We learned from Maine's program that the cost will go down the minute you begin expending dollars.

We are providing this estimate in a neutral environment. As the State begins to invest in this program, vendors will decrease their costs if they know money is coming in over the biennium. We have a "not to exceed" number and the grants will be distributed in the same way.

Chair Kieckhefer:

How did you come up with the value for the employee contract and then the value for the consulting contract with Maine?

Mr. Erquiaga:

All that work was done during the interim by the Task Force with the assistance of the One-to-One Institute. Those numbers are based on that Task Force's research.

Chair Kieckhefer:

Is it the CET or the NDE that has the ultimate authority over, and responsibility for this program?

Mr. Erquiaga:

The CET awards these dollars.

Chair Kieckhefer:

Who is on that Commission?

Mr. Erquiaga:

The CET is appointed by the Governor. Two members of the Legislature are included: Assemblyman D. Paul Anderson, Assembly District No. 13; and Senator Moises (Mo) Denis, Senate District No. 2. Representatives from the districts, libraries and general public are required. The Chair of the CET is currently a member from the general public. The members on the CET have terms that roll. The CET has administered a \$3 million distribution to school districts which used to be about \$30 million per year.

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Chair Kieckhefer:

How functional do you consider this Commission?

Mr. Erquiaga:

The CET is a great organization to be held accountable for handing out this kind of money. This is one of the better-functioning commissions in the Department because they have a long history and good relationships with the entities they work with. This Commission meets around four times a year. The CET's grant review process usually lasts over the course of a 2-day meeting to assure their review is detailed.

Chair Kieckhefer:

Will the NR21 program director be an employee of the CET or an employee of the NDE?

Mr. Erquiaga:

It would be a contractor to the NDE.

Chair Kieckhefer:

The CET is in charge of administering the program, but the person administering the program will not work for them?

Mr. Erquiaga:

The CET is responsible for determining the value of a grant given to each school. The back-of-the-house negotiations with schools and the implementation piece have always been a staff function of the NDE.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:

Please talk more about Maine's program because it seems very new. It looks like they started this program with the iPad for middle school students in early 2013 or late 2014. Have they been using the program long enough to have gained some experience?

Mr. Erquiaga:

This program is new, but they have rolled it out in the same way that we have. We have had our own experiences here in Nevada that are older than Maine's.

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Maine is a good consultant for us because they provide a good example of a full-scale roll to schools.

Lincoln County has been a One-to-One county for a few years. Carson City started 2.5 years ago. Schools in Clark and Washoe Counties have consulted with the Task Force as well. The Carson City experiment began as a pilot with iPads provided under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) funding. The ARRA delivered considerable technology money to the State during the Great Recession. Carson City was one of the school districts, along with others, that used that money to provide an iPad device in every class. The process started by having students not allowed to carry devices with them.

The Task Force that developed NR21 for us drew from both Maine's One-to-One experience and our own school experiences so we have a good understanding of the pitfalls of this program. Problems typically occur on the instructional side. We do not want to send the message that this program replaces teachers in the classroom. This program augments instruction by giving the teacher another tool. This is just like high-tech interactive whiteboards that are being implemented in schools today.

In Carson City, they do not buy as many textbooks as do other counties. They buy textbook licenses and the textbooks reside on the student's laptop. I am recommending NR21 be accomplished in a phased approach. I would not want to begin with placing it in every school in the State. Phasing would begin in the middle schools because we know enough from our own experiences, and other states' experiences, that it will work.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:

Will Maine receive the \$10,000 fee for contract negotiations and money for program mentoring?

Mr. Erquiaga:

They might assist the One-to-One Institute in mentoring us. As we do those professional developments, there will also be operating, travel, and office set-up expenses.

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Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:

Please explain where the program mentoring dollars are headed.

Mr. Erquiaga:

The One-to-One Institute will receive most of the program mentoring funding.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:

Did Maine have lease agreements for their devices?

What did Maine do in terms of loss or theft? What were the number of devices distributed and the number of devices not returned? If a device was not returned, what was the cost to replace it?

It sounds like Carson City has some good practices by not allowing the devices to leave the classroom. Are the parents in Maine the ones held responsible for the cost of the device if the student loses it?

Mr. Erquiaga:

In Carson City, the child can take the device home if the parents agree to it. I cannot speak to Maine; but in Carson City if a child loses or breaks the device, the parents will be held responsible. Some parents cannot afford to absorb that cost so they have opted to have the device remain at school. Other parents have allowed the device to come home. That procedure changed over time though. The school is responsible for setting up a plan on how those practices will work. For example, Carson City has a digital citizenship code that has been integrated with their families and their students to help protect the devices.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:

I remember the conditions of my textbooks when I got them, and then their condition when I returned them at the end of the year. The iPad will be damaged in a student's backpack if it is in there with all the student's other items. I am curious about where Maine is in terms of accountability and costs for devices after conducting this program for a year, especially since they are leased.

Mr. Erquiaga:

Page 29 of [Exhibit C](#) provides a description of B/A 101-2697, Assessments and Accountability. This account includes funding for the Office of Assessments, Data and Accountability Management. This Office administers the End-of-Course (EOC) summative assessments, popularly known as the Criterion-Referenced Test (CRT) or the Nevada High School Proficiency Examination (HSPE). In 2013, the Legislature voted to eliminate the HSPE, replace it with EOC examinations and add a College and Career Readiness (CCR) assessment for students in Grade 11. We are required to administer assessments by law and to select a national testing vendor in the development and administration of those tests. The NDE does not deliver the test. Previously, the test was conducted through booklets, but is now provided by a national vendor and given online. We have used Measured Progress as our testing vendor for several years.

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All of the State's assessments are currently up for review. An RFP to build new vendor relationships for the delivery of the tests is described on page 30 of [Exhibit C](#). Stars on the chart indicate which tests are administered and in what grade levels students take them. The National Assessment of Educational Progress is a federal test that we administer in two grade levels. This test is a statistical sampling test, not administered to the full grade. The English Language Proficiency Assessment, shown at the bottom of the chart, is a consortium focused on English language learners. We use this test as an entry-level assessment and as an exit examination in our English language learner programs. Those tests are administered to a specific population. In general, the other summative tests displayed in the chart are administered once a year. The data acquired from those tests are then rolled up into the State's accountability system. The focus of all these tests and even early grade tests, are now based on the CCR standards and on high school graduation.

Page 31 of [Exhibit C](#) displays the performance measure in B/A 101-2697, high school graduation rate. We have been worst in the Nation and sometimes second worst in the Nation. The Clark County School District made significant improvements in the 2013 school year. Washoe County began its improvement

2 years prior to that. Our statewide average took a large jump in 2013. We want to reach the national average which is currently about 80 percent. Comparisons will be released this week by the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) on how Nevada's growth compares to other states. We are still at the bottom in terms of our overall percentage, but growth has increased from FY 2011 to FY 2013. There is good news in how we compare with other states, particularly with the minority populations.

Assemblyman Kirner:

Graduation rates are typically measured differently from state-to-state. How does our measurement of graduation rate compare to other states' measures?

Mr. Erquiaga:

Previously, each state set their own graduation requirement formula and so the rate calculations varied. The states have now agreed to have a common cohort graduation rate.

The school districts track students starting in the Grade 9 cohort and continue for 4 years even if the student left the school they started in. This long validation process is necessary to determine when and where a student goes if they leave school. This process has resulted in our high school graduation rate being measured in the same way as other states.

In previous years, states administered their own versions of the CRT. This year the SBE has prescribed the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) system. About 4 years ago, Nevada joined SBAC. Approximately 21 states belong to the SBAC, but are not using their tests. The tests they administer are not exactly the same, but we will now be able to compare our CRT results to other states. In previous years our reading proficiency rate would be unrelated to another state's reading proficiency rate.

Assemblyman Kirner:

We spent a lot of time with the Washoe County School District (WCSD) on their vanished student statistic. Vanished students were kids they were unable to track. Are we doing a better job of decreasing the number of vanished students? Because when we start to measure graduation rates, having vanished student numbers alters the data.

Mr. Erquiaga:

The vanished kids in the WCSD were controversial in the State for a long time. Those differences have almost been closed, but are not 100-percent eliminated. We go through a long process where everybody has to use the same system the cohort uses to calculate the graduation rate. There are no more excuses for students in the system to be unaccounted, and they will be placed in some category. It took several months for our staff to conduct this process, due to the difficulties of tracking students. This rate is reported to the federal government, so we must follow their processes, too. As a result, the process is more standardized across districts than it used to be.

Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick:

You are seeing an increase in graduation rates and expectations for growth. Have you accounted for a dip in those rates that will occur once you infuse money into efforts to bring the rates up to par?

When money is infused into new efforts, it takes time for people to adjust to different programs or systems which will result in increases and decreases in rates over the course of the next few years. Do not expect to see a sudden 10 percent increase in graduation rates just because money is infused into new efforts.

How will all the schools be educated on using all of the IT programs they are receiving? How will all the new IT programs be maintained and how will online testing and use of iPads be enabled?

Mr. Erquiaga:

I will first address the anticipated increases and decreases in graduation rate. The significant investment this Session is a down payment for a systemic change. You will not see a sudden large increase in graduation rates or a sudden increase in student's performance on assessment tests. There are kids in the system who have not had the benefit of technology or new inventions. It has taken us a long time to get to where we are now and systemic change requires both investment and reform. It will take some time each year to make incremental change.

We had a large increase in graduation rates in 2013 due to several graduate retrieval programs. In Clark County, retrieval programs helped identify kids who were vanishing, concluding in a significant increase in the graduation rate.

The second question addresses maintenance and IT. Plans are currently under way, also included in the Governor's budget, for the NDE to work on broadband and wide area network (WAN) availability in schools.

SUPERNAP, a Switch company, has partnered with us free of charge to help our rural districts with WAN and broadband access. Other school districts in the State have made Wi-Fi available, but perhaps their WAN is not big enough. We have some money available for matching grants to assist those schools, if needed.

The maintenance of devices in this program is the district's responsibility, just as the maintenance of textbooks would be. If the school and the district choose to participate in NR21 program they have to consider the long-term budget flexibility they will have. If they are not spending a large amount of money on hard copy textbooks, they could use those unused dollars for maintenance.

Page 32 of [Exhibit C](#) provides a description of enhancement unit E-275, an upgrade to the SBAC system in B/A 101-2697. At the State level, Nevada administers summative tests at the end of the school year.

E-275 Educated and Healthy Citizenry — Page K-12 EDUCATION-89

The CRT will be administered in Grades 3 through 8. The districts administer their own interim tests. Teachers and schools use these interim tests along the way to track the progress of students and to prepare them for the State CRT. Today the CRT and interim tests are entirely disconnected. The districts buy their own tests, spending an average of \$6.50 to \$8.00 per student to buy different systems. This poses problems for us on programs, like the Zoom Schools, where we seek standardized data from district-to-district.

The school districts are requesting an aligned assessment system this Session. We are proposing a \$1.4 million General Fund appropriation in each fiscal year to purchase the complete package in the SBAC system. This purchase would

include a subscription to tests with an additional per-pupil charge to the State. The SBE has selected the SBAC as the testing provider. We did not have the money in this year's budget to buy what is called the "complete package." When you purchase the subscription from the provider, a different vendor administers it.

The SBAC system will save about \$3 million, using an average of the student costs at the district level. That moves the cost over to the State, but it also offsets about \$3 million in expenses at the local level.

The districts and teachers have requested this system. They want to have access to the materials and subjects on which their students will be tested so they can prepare their students for interim assessments and State CRTs. Our current system has made the State CRT a surprise because the subject matter has not been necessarily aligned with the district's curriculum.

Providing access to the complete package for our districts and charter schools is a wise investment. It would include access to the digital library and would help align their curriculum to our standards.

Chair Kieckhefer:

Is the \$2.8 million buying the interim EOC examinations?

Mr. Erquiaga:

No. It is buying the interim assessments test for districts and the access to the digital library in the SBAC system. The Base Budget already has money in it to pay for the EOC summative tests and the CRTs in Grades 3 through 8. That is built into the Base Budget and it rolls up in maintenance because of increasing enrollment.

Assemblyman Anderson:

How will our graduation rates change as we change our testing from a HSPE to an EOC assessment?

Mr. Erquiaga:

In high school over the next two years, we will move from the HSPE, which is a test of a student's overall knowledge in English, math and science; to an

EOC examination which is administered at the time the student takes his or her first years of English or mathematics. The HSPE is thought to be disconnected from where a student actually is in his or her progress. The EOC examination is thought to be easier for kids due to its relevancy, and some anticipate seeing a big jump in passage rates.

Testing administrators tell me the EOC examination will not be easier because the standards now are harder. The math is more rigorous on our EOC examination compared to our old math standards, which prior to 2010 consisted of minimal proficiency rather than college standards. I do not expect to see a big jump in passage rates.

The districts were clear with us that we still have to allow multiple attempts for students to pass the EOC examination. Those tests are being piloted this year and next year. No score is given because we have to establish a “cut score.” It is unfair to establish a cut score on a student while he or she is on course to graduate and cannot get their diploma because he or she does not pass the test. It is a complicated transition and results may look like they did before. The test is about how much kids know.

Page 34 of [Exhibit C](#) discusses enhancement E-299, funding for an alternative exam to the HSPE. We anticipated the need for an alternative exam to the HSPE, but found out that it is unnecessary because the HSPE is phasing out. Since we do not need an alternative exam, there is \$500,000 in a budget amendment that we will not be spending.

E-299 Educated and Healthy Citizenry — Page K-12 EDUCATION-90

Page 35 discusses enhancement E-288, a request for a management analyst (MA) II. This is a General Fund appropriation into the Office of Assessment, Data and Accountability Management. This position will manage the testing environment of our districts and charter schools. It is a performance management position, responsible for managing thousands of test documents going out to students and managing contracts with vendors. This position is becoming more important as this work becomes increasingly complex. When we make a mistake, it affects almost all of the 450,000 kids in this system.

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Mistakes have been made before and the result is not good. This is an important position for quality control purposes.

E-288 Educated and Healthy Citizenry — Page K-12 EDUCATION-89

Page 37 of [Exhibit C](#) provides a description of the new Office of Early Learning and Development. This Office was comprised of a single individual, housed within a large office and responsible for performing a large number of tasks, such as administering the State's prekindergarten (Pre-K) program which serves about 1,400 to 1,500 students in half-day programs. The Governor has created this Office with IFC approval using Head Start program and Nevada Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) dollars. We received a large federal grant of \$43 million over 4 years that will be administered in this Office as well.

Page 38 describes the performance measures for B/A 101-2709. By June 2017, we hope to double the number of children participating in State Pre-K programs. Our Pre-K program, Head Start, has about 6,000 students already participating. The CCDF has their own performance measures but, as part of this federal grant, we will, over the life of the grant, almost double the number of students in this program. We will also double the amount of time students are served in the CCDF to meet quality preschool standards. This is a full-day program, not a 2 hour and 50 minute program. It is similar to full-day kindergarten versus half-day kindergarten. This grant also includes quality measures around standards and instructional support. Our grant programs will have higher standards and will have a star-rating system similar to the one we use for the school performance framework.

NDE - Office of Early Learning and Development — Budget Page K-12
EDUCATION-126 (Volume I)
Budget Account 101-2709

Chair Kieckhefer:

Does that star-rating program exist currently?

Mr. Erquiaga:

It does, but only in a limited application. This is a national system we are piloting in preschools and are still working through the kinks of determining how

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it is applicable to Pre-K programs as we expand the number of participants. The star-rating program is applicable in part of our environment but we are seeing if it will be applicable to daycare centers and school districts.

Chair Kieckhefer:

It will be incredibly useful to parents.

Mr. Erquiaga:

This is great information for parents, but parents are often making choices on Pre-K programs based on the times they are open and their commuter schedule. The academic rigor of the program is not usually taken into consideration.

Chair Kieckhefer:

As we start spending additional money on these programs, will we be able to categorize them as high performing? Will we have a list of Pre-K programs that are not high performing?

Mr. Erquiaga:

They are rated in the same way so the legal guardians will be able to tell the aptitude of the program.

Assemblyman Kirner:

It is one thing to fund these programs and it is another to measure their success over time. When I look at your performance measurements, they focus on the number of children participating, and are not outcome based. The Governor's goal is to change the graduation rates 12 years down the line. How will we know whether the investment in these Pre-K programs is hitting its target and will result in something better further into the future rather than just getting kids on the same level by Grade 3?

Mr. Erquiaga:

Changing the high school graduation rates down the line will stem from the increased number of high quality Pre-K programs. To assure the quality of these programs, the State has required an independent evaluation of its Pre-K programs. The first cohort of 1,400 kids in our CCDF federal grant programs is now seventh or eighth graders. We have determined the achievement levels of

these students based on the CRT scores. For this cohort of students, the achievement levels is higher than similarly situated students.

Under the Nevada Ready! high quality federal Preschool Development Grants Program, funding requires us to conduct a longitudinal study and maintain records of these kids. Outcome measures have been built into these programs. These programs are socioeconomically focused and are about helping children living in poverty. We also have to expand our study and conduct research on kindergarten readiness assessments. We need to determine if a 4-year-old who attends a Pre-K program has a higher achievement level later down the line compared to a child who did not have the benefit of attending a Pre-K program.

This biennium, the Pre-K programs are primarily funded with federal dollars. There is a match over the biennium of about \$10 million in General Fund money that must go to support the Nevada Ready! grant program. We are waiting to deliver this federal grant program in the five counties whose students are participating.

It is such an expensive grant because it is as much quality based as it is access based. There are not a large number of kids participating, but it will reduce the percentage of children living in poverty in our State to about 15 percent. It will not dramatically change the overall numbers of students who attend preschool, a category in which we are last in the Nation.

Our quality efforts are focused on programs that receive both State and federal assistance. Preschools, that do not accept federal and State assistance, are not subject to our quality star-rating system and our requirements for teachers. Our evaluations are focused on programs that we fund. Because we currently do not have a comprehensive strategy for early learning, it is an important step to evaluate all Pre-K programs so we can gather the information that Nevada needs to develop one.

Chair Kieckhefer:

Are all of our existing State Pre-K programs funded with federal dollars?

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Mr. Erquiaga:

No. We fund State programs. Historically, the State has provided about \$3 million in General Fund appropriations for State Pre-K. We also have federal dollars for Pre-K and for special education Pre-K from Title I funding of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. We have additional federal dollars from child care development grants, which do not necessarily apply to preschool, but might be used for home visits or grants to attend a child care center. This request is for a new investment of about \$10 million over the biennium.

Page 40 of [Exhibit C](#) displays enhancement E-275, the positions associated with the Preschool Development grant, a mix of federal dollars and General Fund dollars. This grant has some latitude in its composition so we can conduct an appropriate cost allocation when disbursing funds.

E-275 Educated and Healthy Citizenry — Page K-12 EDUCATION-128

For example, the Education Program Professional (EPP) supervisor might be funded by 30 percent General Fund appropriations and 70 percent federal dollars. Another position might be funded by 10 percent General Fund appropriations and 90 percent federal dollars. We will make these cost allocation decisions with the DOE. These positions are all new, are all tied to that grant and focused on the expansion of access and increasing quality.

Page 41 of [Exhibit C](#) discuss enhancement E-276, a feasibility study on Pre-K social impact bonds.

E-276 Educated and Healthy Citizenry — Page K-12 EDUCATION-128

Page 42 displays a diagram of social impact bonds. We have proposed conducting a feasibility analysis to determine if these types of bonds will be successful in Nevada. Instead of issuing government secured bonds or General Fund appropriations to pay for a program, we want to use social impact bonds. This pay for success bond process works by having a private entity, such as a major bank, put up the money for a specific program that has a specific measurable outcome over time. In theory, private entities are investing the

money up front to pay for government costs. That private investor is paid back only if the program is successful.

For example, money is borrowed so it can be invested in early childhood education to produce future educational cost savings. Cost savings occur because educational outcomes are enhanced with early investment and fewer students will require remediation. If interventions, such as special education or literacy occur, the success of the bonds would be affected.

This idea is used in prisons. Social impact bonds pay for a recidivism program to prevent inmates from returning to the penitentiaries. It results in the State or county achieving cost savings and the ability to pay back the bond costs because they do not have to re-incarcerate those individuals.

The State of Utah is working with social impact bonds in early learning. Their focus is primarily on special education, identifying learning disabilities in preschool to produce savings over time in the lifetime education of that student.

We know adding the costs of Pre-K social impact bonds to the General Fund will, over time, be beyond our fiscal reach. This program is worth analyzing on because of its potential rewards.

Page 43 of [Exhibit C](#) discusses two grants secured for the preschool social impact bonds in enhancement unit E-276. The Department of Administration's Office of Grant Procurement, Coordination and Management, has helped us receive the two grants. One is from Harvard University, which will pay for a person to come and work with us on this program. The other grant is from Third Sector Capital Partners to help with the analysis piece and work with the City of Las Vegas and Clark County.

The grant from Third Sector Capital Partners will require a \$25,000 State match, instead of a \$125,000 match, which is another \$100,000 back from my budget request. If we can determine that social impact bonds are a viable alternative, future county, city and state governments could come before local governing or State governing bodies with a plan to provide pay-for-success bonding. The cost savings would occur primarily at the local level, but the State has an interest in fostering this sort of conversation.

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Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick:

I am concerned about how we will distribute dollars to our kids. How does the feasibility study do us any good if we do not have any parameters that we want to reach?

We are always trying to find creative financing avenues rather than doing what we know works. Implementing another creative financing piece will be hard to balance with all the other education things we are attempting.

Chair Kieckhefer:

Successful outcomes achieved at earlier ages will save money in the long term, but I do not anticipate budgets for those higher grades going down enough to generate actual dollar savings that we could use to pay anything back.

Those budgets will continue to grow and we will have to budget some artificial number, moving forward, for how much we saved to pay back bonding. We are seeing the same thing in an energy program and in our Capital Improvement Program projects budget.

It is a feasibility study and making it a \$25,000 request instead of a \$125,000 request is a lot more palatable.

Mr. Erquiaga:

Page 45 of [Exhibit C](#) provides a description of the Office of Student and School Supports. This is a new office that amalgamates a number of programs targeting special service populations, whether they are racial or ethnic groups, English language learners, children in poverty or associated with Title I funding.

This Office distributes federal dollars to those programs and there are requirements on how the money is distributed and how that money is spent. The State does not have a say in how those federal dollars are spent. These programs are for the populations that have an achievement gap and for schools that are underperforming. This Office leads the underperforming schools turnaround effort.

Page 46 displays our performance measure for B/A 101-2712, removing 80 percent of underperforming schools from that status by September 2018.

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This Office is responsible for administering federal funds and new State funds to close the achievement gap and thus drive down the number of underperforming schools. This Office will achieve this performance goal by working closely with the districts, charter schools and governing boards to drive down that number.

NDE - Student and School Support — Budget Page K-12 EDUCATION-135
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Budget Account 101-2712

Page 47 of [Exhibit C](#) discusses enhancement unit E-278, a request to add an EPP to support the Victory Schools Program. The Victory Schools Program is funded by a different budget account, B/A 101-2615. This enhancement unit in B/A 101-2712 is requesting an EPP to administer funds, review plans, inform the schools of the plans, and conduct monitoring.

E-278 Educated and Healthy Citizenry — Page K-12 EDUCATION-138

NDE - School Remediation Trust Fund — Budget Page K-12 EDUCATION-32
(Volume I)
Budget Account 101-2615

Chair Kieckhefer:

Is this EPP supposed to be housed in Carson City?

Mr. Erquiaga:

The person will be wherever we can find them. We will open this job statewide.

Chair Kieckhefer:

The Victory Schools Program was about identifying the various community needs required to address the educational challenge caused by poverty. If the person in charge of overseeing the program is stuck in their office in Carson City and is not actually out working in the field, where a lot of that work needs to be done, an understanding gap may occur.

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Mr. Erquiaga:

We have tried to send a number of positions to Clark County. We often have a hiring challenge in Clark County because of our salary structure. We will seat the EPP where we can find the most qualified individual.

Page 48 of [Exhibit C](#) discusses enhancement units E-276 and E-278 in B/A 101-2712 and their roles in the Underperforming School Turnaround Program initiative. Two positions are requested, an EPP and a MA II. This initiative focuses on applying contracts and vendors to schools in need. We have that list of schools. Some will be on a turnaround plan with their districts and some will be on a turnaround plan with the State. The EPP would administer assessment assistance, coaching and data analysis. The MA II would evaluate our performance management and assist with tracking the underperforming schools improvement and success.

E-276 Educated and Healthy Citizenry — Page K-12 EDUCATION-137

Page 49 discusses enhancements E-279 and E-972, the creation of the Safe and Respectful Learning Office. This Office would include three positions. The first is an existing EPP position, funded by a grant that expires soon and is requested to be rolled over into the General Fund. The Governor requests the addition of two new positions: a director and an administrative assistant II. This Office will report to the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

E-279 Educated and Healthy Citizenry — Page K-12 EDUCATION-139

E-972 Trans Parental Involve 2706 To Student School 2712 — Page K-12
EDUCATION-144

Page 50 of [Exhibit C](#) provides an overview of the responsibilities of the Safe and Respectful Learning Office. Some of the responsibilities are set by statute.

Page 51 displays the three statutory mandates for this Office: NRS 388.1341, NRS 388.1342 and NRS 388.1325.

Page 52 shows a table of the operating expenses associated with the Safe and Respectful Learning Office. Several of the Office's expenses address the prevention of bullying. The number of parent complaints that reach the NDE

about bullying has significantly increased. The districts also have policies about bullying due to increasing attention in our laws, communications and mass media. A policy bill will come from the Governor's Office to address some of NDE's responsibilities in dealing with bullying. Major issues for the State are the severity of bullying and parents' dissatisfaction with the current resolution. If the State wants to be involved in decreasing bullying, we need resources to start our efforts and to assist families.

Chair Kieckhefer:

Enhancement units E-275 and E-280 provide \$30,000 in each fiscal year to help accomplish various functions. Some of the functions being funded are items that should be district responsibilities, items that should be covered in training. One item being funded is to put together a pamphlet. These items seem down the scale compared to the broader picture of what we are attempting to accomplish here. Creating a school environment free from bullying and cyberbullying is something districts should already be doing in their schools and giving them \$30,000 will not help them accomplish what they are not doing already.

E-275 Educated and Healthy Citizenry — Page K-12 EDUCATION-137

E-280 Educated and Healthy Citizenry — Page K-12 EDUCATION-139

Mr. Erquiaga:

The \$30,000 in enhancement units E-275 and E-280 covers the evaluation piece for all our programs. However, there is a \$30,000 line item associated with the social worker grant.

Existing statutes give the NDE the task of fostering a bully-free environment from a regulatory perspective. For bullying, the NDE is required to establish the policy requirement, the training of staff and monitor how that process is done.

The Legislature has built a body of law around cyberbullying, physical bullying, and verbal bullying in schools. Managing bullying is becoming a part of our responsibility. For the first time, we are funding the Bullying Prevention Account that currently has a balance of zero. We are proposing in enhancement unit

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E-279 to place money in that account for a few training programs, travel expenses and monitoring programs.

Currently we are required to produce a pamphlet without a budget. We are required to do training, but due to limited resources this biennium we are only able to develop a PowerPoint presentation and email it out. Because too many kids are being affected by bullying, it is a priority for us as educators and people who administer this system.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:

I am trying to figure out the costs associated with the Social Worker/Mental Health Professional Program in enhancement unit E-281. The actual screening tool for the Social Worker/Mental Health Professional Program looks to be a onetime cost of \$170,000 and an additional \$30,000 each fiscal year for an audit of the Program. I am not seeing the costs for the social worker grants to the schools or the number of the mental health professionals that you are proposing to hire.

E-281 Educated and Healthy Citizenry — Page K-12 EDUCATION-140

Mr. Erquiaga:

The numbers are provided on page 54 of [Exhibit C](#). This social workers grants program provides about \$11 million in the first year, because it will take a full semester to get it up and running, and about \$24 million in the second year of the biennium.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:

To quantify that, how many mental health professionals will there be?

Mr. Erquiaga:

That number of mental health professionals is based on the ratio for the ultimate rollout of one professional for every 250 students in every school. That ratio is set for this job classification. The WCSD's current ratio is one professional to 60,000 students. Clark County School District (CCSD) has a ratio 28 professionals to 318,000 students.

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Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:

That is good because those numbers are closer to the recommendations in the guidelines coming from the American Counseling Association and what we see in other school districts in states like Georgia.

Since the mental health professionals will not be assigned to a school, will the school districts apply for 4 or 5 of them?

Mental health professionals will only be administering the screening tool and the evaluations, primarily producing macro aggregate data. I hope these mental health professionals will be doing some one-on-one personal work with students who may need more social work.

Mr. Erquiaga:

What you see in today's budget presentation is the only request for the Safe and Respectful Learning Office. This Office serves as the State's backbone on these issues. For this office we are requesting 3 positions. This screening device helps us determine which schools get served first. As a practical matter, Nevada will struggle to get this many mental health professionals who can be reassigned to do school work.

Let us assume we get this office funded, it administers the screening tool and identifies and creates a ranking order based on the need of the schools. We then would issue block grants to each of the school districts or charter schools based on population. School districts already have guidance counselors and cannot afford social workers, so we would provide them.

The social and behavioral health workers we would be providing on the ground can deliver direct services in schools that guidance counselors may not be able to provide. They have the expertise to manage a student's individual and family-related issues, and will have the ability to refer them to clinicians or outside services.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:

What set of criteria will you use to prioritize the schools and will it be based on any of the same criteria used in the Zoom, Victory or Turnaround School Programs?

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Mr. Erquiaga:

The screening device will prioritize the schools. It is a screening device focused around mental health related questions.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:

What is the Healthy Kids School Climate Survey?

Mr. Erquiaga:

The survey asks questions pertaining to student well-being and issues that a social worker might identify as problem areas.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:

Is the screening tool computer-based and not interpersonal?

Mr. Erquiaga:

Yes. Some are done online so they can be done quicker. I met with the social workers in Clark County last week and they have their own set of questions for their unique population. Their list had 18 questions on it which would then become our performance measures to see if we could enhance the outcomes of the answers to those questions in schools.

We have the screening tool evaluations to identify and prioritize schools, but many of the stakeholders will want to know whether we were successful in helping these schools. The surveys will monitor the success of the program and allow us to make the necessary adjustments to schools.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:

When you purchase the screening tool, did they indicate the appropriate number of students needed as a survey population? Did they also say that one social worker was enough to handle the follow-up to sets of questions for 60,000 kids in Washoe County?

Mr. Erquiaga:

Ideally the ratio of one social work to 250 students is what their association recommends.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:

What are the criteria for prioritizing which schools get the social workers?

Mr. Erquiaga:

All schools in the State would take the initial screening survey to determine where our challenges were. We start by doing an assessment of all schools in the State. The assessment helps us then allocate that money in priority order. Once they are served, mental health professionals monitor the process.

Assemblywoman Benitez-Thompson:

What are the metrics of the initial screening surveys to determine if they are effective?

Mr. Erquiaga:

There is a line item for evaluation in almost all of these new programs. A third party would bid for the opportunity to evaluate these programs at the Governor's request. We would issue an RFP that highlights the programs we have so an evaluator could bid on all of these programs, or fewer of them. Our primary evaluator tends to be Regional Education Laboratories, an entity funded by the federal government. Universities also win many of these bids. The CET is usually evaluated by one of our universities. Each evaluation has its own performance measures.

We have two experiences with third party evaluations in the Office of Early Learning and Development and in the CET. Since the Legislature has required us to conduct our evaluations this way in the past, we have decided to model it that way across all of these new programs.

Chair Kieckhefer:

This individual program would be more difficult to quantitatively evaluate on an annual basis if we are using benchmark data from a survey that is not being reconducted.

Mr. Erquiaga:

The social workers use their own survey instruments with their specific population. That gives them a pretest and posttest with their assigned schools.

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They will be helpful to us as will the Department of Health and Human Services in setting those inside program performance metrics.

Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick:

Once we get the pre-evaluation and postevaluation, how will they be measured on the State level with the various types of dynamics and social economics across our state?

There are different needs in every single county so what will the actual form look like? The needs in Esmerelda County are not the same as the needs in Washoe County.

Also, kids grow up with different levels of resources, so how would we measure that factor?

Finally, across the State what should we expect to see on the evaluation?

Mr. Erquiaga:

All schools should have an adequate number of social workers based on the ratio and that is what our budget will provide over the biennium. Hiring that many mental health professionals is challenging in the State. I needed a way to prioritize that hiring so the money does not sit in a school district. We will prioritize the schools based on where the need is greatest first. Once we get the school prioritized, the hiring will begin.

Over the biennium we will reach all schools, and realize there are different needs in schools across the State. The social workers will ask similar questions on mental health, but the different types of answers given to those questions will help a professional address and diagnose the different needs across the State.

The problems diagnosed could consist of issues such as thoughts of suicide, depression, eating disorders or challenges at home. The outside evaluator will help us determine what types of challenges we are dealing with at the beginning of the year and will show us our progress in addressing those challenges by year's end.

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Chair Kieckhefer:

Would this be an anonymous screening device with no identifiable personal information?

Mr. Erquiaga:

This is always a concern for people because the questions are personal, but it is done anonymously. Students can opt out of this survey if they would like.

Page 55 of [Exhibit C](#) discusses enhancement unit E-290 in B/A 101-2712, expansion of Advanced Placement (AP) courses. The AP courses are high school programs at a higher rigor than the regular courses. Teachers need to have special training to teach these classes and the students who participate in these courses must take a test at the end of the class to receive college credits. Students must pass both the course and the test to receive college credits.

E-290 Educated and Healthy Citizenry — Page K-12 EDUCATION-140

This request is to expand the number of AP courses and the availability of instructors. This money will double our participation rate in the AP program and the amount of teacher preparation to help more students pass the end of class exam. The participation rates in these programs are behind the national averages, particularly among African-American students and students in poverty.

These numbers were derived from an analysis working with the College Board, the International Baccalaureate Organization and Cambridge International Examinations. The analysis shows where participation rates are today and what the national average is for at-risk students or students of color.

The AP courses help kids going on to college and are a real incentive. Kids who complete AP programs in high school start college with credits and understand the rigor of college classes.

We need to expand AP programs in Nevada to a more diverse student population. Some of this funding is direct aid and some is competitive grants for schools wanting to increase their programs. There is no requirement for a school to offer AP courses. This is a wise investment in high-performing academics.

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We have many high-performing students in our State and we want to ensure they have equal access to this program.

Chair Kieckhefer:

Is this about the ability of the school or the State to pay the fees associated with taking the test? Are there set criteria for determining who would be eligible to access that funding?

Mr. Erquiaga:

It is about paying the fee for the course because kids cannot afford it. The competitive grants are about increasing participation in those student populations.

Chair Kieckhefer:

We have identified that there is a sizeable number of children who take an AP class, go through the entire year taking the class and then do not take the test because the cost is a barrier.

Mr. Erquiaga:

Yes or they do not pass the test. We have both tracks to address.

Chair Kieckhefer:

Is this a grant program to school districts?

Mr. Erquiaga:

This is a competitive grant to schools. This is a school-based program and much of it is used for professional development. Some of that money would go to a Regional Professional Development Program (RPDP). An example of such an RPDP would be training a teacher to teach an AP class.

Page 57 of [Exhibit C](#) provides a description of B/A 101-2713, Literacy Programs. Literacy is one of the key programs of the NDE. Today, we access literacy through our English language arts assessment in the CRT. We are focused on Grade 3 literacy because it is a gateway grade level to future success.

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Budget Account 101-2713

Page 58 of [Exhibit C](#) describes our performance measure for Literacy Programs: to increase the percentage of Grade 3 students who are on, or above, their grade level in reading, as measured by EOC assessments, from 61 percent to 82 percent by 2020. We lag in this area due to slow growth in reaching new proficiency rates. The challenges here are diverse.

Page 59 describes enhancement unit E-490, the Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Program (SRCL) federal grant. This is a successful program we have administered and operated in only a few of Nevada's counties. This program will sunset in September 2016, but reports success in increasing literacy rates. It is an intensive "hands on" approach.

E-490 Expiring Grant/Program — Page K-12 EDUCATION-151

Positions in our Department work with these schools, or provide literacy coaching in these schools. Time is already set aside in these schools for this program and it has proven to be successful. It is a model for the Nevada State Literacy Plan (NSLP) which has been under development for 7 months and will be formally adopted by the SBE in April. The plan is at the printer now and is based on grade bands. It will include the kindergarten through Grade 3 space, which is the one this Legislature has talked about the most in recent years.

Page 60 of [Exhibit C](#) describes enhancement unit E-280, a request for positions to support the Read by Grade Three program. This grants program focuses on underperforming schools with low proficiency rates. This program starts small by providing \$4.9 million to our schools in FY 2016 and increases to provide \$22.3 million in FY 2017 to kindergarten through Grade 3 literacy improvement. Two full-time equivalent EPPs will be needed to oversee implementation of the program and monitor its success. These two EPPs will export work through the NSLP and handle the approval of these plans as they come from schools that need assistance with their Grade 3 reading.

E-280 Educated and Healthy Citizenry — Page K-12 EDUCATION-150

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Assemblyman Kirner:

You want to implement this program across the State, but the school districts are the ones who do that. Is this an unfunded mandate for the school districts?

Do they have staff in place to carry out this program or will they have to hire people?

Does this change the mandates in funding of the respective school districts?

Mr. Erquiaga:

The policy bill you will see later is a low impact bill in terms of the impact it would have on existing staff in districts. It will not create an unfunded mandate. This policy bill is about the use of time and rededicating a strategist position within a school. These dollars are meant to augment that so there is no impact. The dollars are also meant to help school districts that need help with a program to reach the goal of Grade 3 proficiency.

In prior iterations of a Grade 3 guarantee of literacy, one of the challenges has been the fiscal impact it has on the schools. To solve this challenge we have adjusted the impact at the school, the time line of the guarantee and provided State assistance.

Chair Kieckhefer:

Is the data you provided for the SRCL specific for children touched by the program?

Mr. Erquiaga:

Yes. Also, only children in a handful of counties are participating.

Chair Kieckhefer:

Were these funds rolled out by schools for the SRCL?

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Mr. Erquiaga:

The SRCL is a district-wide federal grant program. Select schools were chosen to receive specific assistance, such as a literacy coach or a staff member from the NDE.

Chair Kieckhefer:

As shown on page 59 [Exhibit C](#), proficiency rates for disadvantaged students rose from 26 percent to 46 percent. Is that only for the subset of students served by the Program and not for every student ever served by that Program?

Mr. Erquiaga:

Yes.

Chair Kieckhefer:

Is that at a specific age or grade level?

Mr. Erquiaga:

I do not know the specific age or grade level of the students who were included in the proficiency rate increase of disadvantaged students from 26 percent to 46 percent. I can deliver the SRCL Report, which we send to the federal government, to your staff.

Chair Kieckhefer:

The SBAC system, enhancement unit E-275 in B/A 101-2713, includes membership fees and costs for related State-managed activities. Please discuss what that investment is and what we should be receiving for that.

E-275 Educated and Healthy Citizenry — Page K-12 EDUCATION-150

Mr. Erquiaga:

This is the overall budget for assessments in the CRT space and it is now the SBAC system. There are three components: a fee is paid on a per-pupil basis to the consortiums, SBAC designs the questions and then the computer adaptive system is delivered so tests can be taken on a computer.

The membership fee is the fee we pay per-student. We propose a higher membership fee per-pupil so our districts can obtain access to the interim

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assessments and the digital library. The membership fee components entail a summative test in English and math along with the computer adaptive technology that rolls the test out. This fee is new to us. Testing fees are paid to a vendor for the delivery of the test, which is currently out for bid now.

The vendor would be delivering items such as science test workbooks or SBAC assessment tests to the schools. This would include the delivery to schools of the actual questions and materials associated with those questions. The membership fees and the implementation of the SBAC system are included in the Base Budget and maintenance budget.

Previously, we paid for CRTs in a different way. Instead of paying a membership fee to SBAC, we paid someone to develop questions. By having a membership fee, we are now paying for questions already developed in a consortium to which we belong, and in which Nevada teachers and Nevada System of Higher Education professors participated in the creation of those questions. This changes where the money goes. By joining that consortium, we will receive a higher quality product. The tests are called Next Generation Assessments.

Chair Kieckhefer:

If approved, will this funding be transferred into the Assessment and Accountability budget, B/A 101-2697?

Mindy Martini (Deputy Superintendent for Business and Support Services, Department of Education):

Yes.

Mr. Erquiaga:

Page 62 of [Exhibit C](#) provides a description of B/A 101-2716, Data Systems Management. This budget account resides in Office of Assessments, Data and Accountability Management. Our data systems serve as the backbone of our accountability system that is required by law. We use data systems for the delivery of information that districts or charter schools need to give tests.

NDE - Data Systems Management — Budget Page K-12 EDUCATION-175
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Budget Account 101-2716

Our data system receives information from schools about each student. When it is time for students to take tests administered by the State, that system provides historic data of each student's test results and allows us determine what tests they should be given. We report this information back to the schools who then administer the tests to their students.

The underlying function of our data system is to report accountability information. Information comes in, information is analyzed at the Department level, as required by law, and we then deliver reports. One report is the Nevada Report Card, which is created school-by-school. The Nevada Report Card now includes the Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF), which is a star-rating system, and a host of other aggregated data. That all comprises the legislatively mandated State annual Accountability Report, which requires us to inform the Legislature and parents about items in the aggregate. All this data is anonymized, but is reflected on the Nevada Report Card which discusses the kinds of teachers, discipline records, performance levels on CRTs, performance level at graduation and attendance level. Our data system compiles the data for these categories.

Page 63 of [Exhibit C](#) shows this budget account's performance measure, to expand the use of the NSPF. Nevada has 724 district and charter public schools. About 100 of the schools do not have a star rating. Schools without a star rating are called alternative schools or small schools.

A small school may be established for special education purposes, behavior purposes or just so small in general that delivering a star rating would de-anonymize their students. We are required by federal law to include alternative schools in the framework and our goal is to achieve that by the fall of 2016. This system is intended to rate all schools so the public has information on every school in the State.

Page 64 displays enhancement unit E-227, the addition of an IT professional III. This position will fulfill data requests for the public, NDE staff and will also dictate the exchange of reports and data in a timely fashion. This position is required to maintain the dataset that is used in the Statewide Longitudinal Data System and will be responsible for coding.

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E-227 Efficient and Responsive State Government — Page K-12
EDUCATION-175

Chair Kieckhefer:

Are requests not being fulfilled at this point because you do not have a position in the System of Accountability Information in Nevada (SAIN)?

Mr. Erquiaga:

Follow-up requests are slow at this point. Part of it due to our learning curve and part of it is due to there not being enough people to run and analyze the data. This IT position would do the programing to support an MA in performance management.

Page 65 discusses enhancement unit E-229, a request for data privacy and test security contract funds. When we have a testing irregularity or a concern about data privacy, there is no wiggle room to seek help from the outside. We were using the Office of the Attorney General (AG) for test security. I had to borrow money from other accounts because we were using services with the AG that were outside of our internal transfers. This request is not specifically identified. I cannot tell you today I will use this \$250,000 on these specific things. In the realm of data security and privacy and test irregularity and security, problems occur spontaneously. This office needs the ability to obtain outside assistance, if needed.

E-229 Efficient and Responsive State Government — Page K-12
EDUCATION-175

The NDE's test security programs were reviewed by WestEd and they recommended we develop the test security plan we are required to provide to the districts. As we move into a new world of computer testing, seeking outside expertise is necessary for unexpected data and systemic errors.

Chair Kieckhefer:

Is there a statewide policy on this type of security or is it done at the district level?

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Mr. Erquiaga:

Both. There is a statewide policy set in law and we have data privacy policies that are adopted at the SBE. The Nevada Employee Action and Timekeeping System maintains our servers. At the district level, they have their own security procedures and policies. Also, Assembly Bill (A.B.) 221 has been introduced by Assemblyman Randy Kirner to address the field of law on what is, and is not, public, and how these processes and policies should be promulgated.

ASSEMBLY BILL 221: Revises provisions relating to data concerning pupils.
(BDR 34-147)

Page 66 of Exhibit C discusses enhancement E-243, the Infinite Campus student information services request. Infinite Campus is a student service that resides at the district or charter school level. The WCSD, the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA), and CCSD have implemented Infinite Campus. This is the record-keeping system at their level. It contains courses, rosters, teachers, attendance counts and several additional components. It is a robust system. When CCSD made its system conversion this year, it was clear that SAIN was unable to communicate correctly to the CCSD Infinite Campus system. The SAIN was working with the WCSD and SPCSA Infinite Campus systems because there are not as many records as there are in the CCSD. In working with Infinite Campus, we set up a State-level system to facilitate the process of CCSD's system transition. It makes sense for the State to have the same system for the exchange of information and conducting enforcement standardization. That data goes from the districts' system into the SAIN system, to help us create a system of accountability, a growth model, and conduct the reporting of test results.

E-243 Efficient and Responsive State Government — Page K-12
EDUCATION-176

Chair Kieckhefer:

This does not replace the SAIN system, and is this the aggregator for all of the school district data funneling into the SAIN?

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Mr. Erquiaga:

Yes. Then, SAIN did the things required of it by law. Today it does not.

Page 68 of [Exhibit C](#) shows that the Legislature approved funding to make changes to SAIN. This funding will be reverted in anticipation of the potential statewide implementation of Infinite Campus.

Page 69 displays a breakdown of the total costs in enhancement unit E-243. Our proposal will bring the rural districts on board so we are on all on the same student IT system to avoid future IT challenges. The funding of \$3,503,818 over the biennium will get the State system to be functional and will implement the system in the 15 additional counties that are operating without it.

Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick:

This system will allow us to communicate statewide. We will not only be able to apply for more grants across the State, but will also be able to take all these IT tools and use them across the State in different places.

Mr. Erquiaga:

Yes. The purpose of this data analysis is partly to create accountability and improve instruction. This system will allow us to see where common problems are occurring and what types of evidence-based practices helped.

Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick:

We have taken the creativity and fun out of educating because now we have all these expectations. Someone might learn more if we were more creative. The way they handle things differently across the State may provide new ideas to other areas. The accountability part is good, but you can only measure accountability so much because a student, truly by their instructional needs, will tell us where we are accountable.

Chair Kieckhefer:

The parents in the rural counties will be exceptionally pleased with Infinite Campus, but have they signed off on this?

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Mr. Erquiaga:

Yes. We asked the rural counties who wanted to be first in implementing Infinite Campus and more than five hands went up.

Chair Kieckhefer:

The districts' costs on page 69 of [Exhibit C](#) will be absorbed by the State in the first 2 years. Will the expectation be that the districts will pay that cost moving forward?

Mr. Erquiaga:

They will pay the maintenance for Infinite Campus the same way they pay the maintenance for the PowerSchool system.

Page 71 describes enhancement unit E-278, the NSPF accountability report. The vendor that manages the back end of this for us is eMetric. Changes need to be made to that program almost every year as we add alternative schools and change how many schools are rated. The growth model will need to be recalculated when changing CRTs and EOC examinations. It is currently calculated on existing tests, but will now be calculated on a new baseline established in this fiscal year with the administration of new tests. The costs associated with this request are \$385,000 in FY 2016 and \$285,000 in FY 2017.

E-278 Educated and Healthy Citizenry — Page K-12 EDUCATION-176

Page 72 of [Exhibit C](#) discusses enhancement unit E-294, a stand-alone school climate survey for the NSPF. Both CCSD and WCSD have their own climate surveys. At the State level we have not rolled up that data. We will look to see if we can use an existing survey in one of our districts and compile it, or go to an outside survey. This survey will evaluate how the students, parents and teachers feel about their school. Currently school ratings are only based on tests and we would like the school climate to factor into that rating.

E-294 Educated and Healthy Citizenry — Page K-12 EDUCATION-176

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Chair Kieckhefer:

In many cases parents know what is going on in their schools. The \$800,000 in General Fund appropriations for an across-the-board survey that evaluates things such as a child's belongingness seems difficult to accept.

Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick:

There has to be a cheaper way to get intelligence on what is going on in our schools. It should not be the evaluation of one school, but the evaluation of the schools that feed into the high school as well. Having a Web site where people could provide their input would go farther.

Chair Kieckhefer:

We will now discuss budget accounts from the SPCSA.

Patrick Gavin (Director, State Public Charter School Authority, Department of Education):

I will be covering the SPCSA budget accounts within my PowerPoint presentation entitled "State Public Charter School Authority" ([Exhibit E](#)).

Page 2 of [Exhibit E](#) provides an overview of our Authority. This budget account was created by S.B. No. 212 of the 76th Session. We are the statewide sponsor of charter schools not sponsored by school districts. We oversee 22 separate charter school boards which operate 36 campuses and collectively serve 20,000 students.

We are the local education agency of record so we function as the school district for those schools and their students. Collectively, we are the third largest public school system in the State.

The responsibility of our staff is to administer the authorization function of the SPCSA, provide technical assistance and support to independent charter school boards, provide regulation and oversight to those boards and to support the activities of our governing board. The governing board has authority to decide which schools will be authorized, renewed or closed.

Page 3 discusses enhancement unit E-226 in B/A 101-2711. This enhancement will add two positions to support program management and ensure compliance:

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an accountant II and an MA III. The accountant II will assist the executive team in the fiscal accountability of schools. Schools not only provide us with their annual audits, which require significant analysis and review, but are also required to provide a variety of financial reports on a quarterly basis on how they spend the public funds entrusted to them by the State. The primary role of the MA III will be to assist with the overall development and authorization of high quality charter schools throughout the State.

State Public Charter School Authority — Budget Page CHARTER SCHOOL-6
(Volume I)
Budget Account 101-2711

E-226 Efficient and Responsive State Government — Page CHARTER SCHOOL-8

Chair Kieckhefer:

Will the accountant II position absorb some of the functions currently being performed by the director and administrative services officer?

Mr. Gavin:

Yes. The accountant II position will both absorb and enhance the work being done with those two positions. Enhancement unit E-277, an accountant assistant III, discussed on page 4 of [Exhibit E](#), is the role that would take on more of the fiscal management duties. Currently, two staff members who should be solely focused on performance management of schools with relation to academic achievement and governance, are also working on the fiscal management of the SPCSA and the stewardship of federal funds we disburse to schools.

E-277 Educated and Healthy Citizenry — Page CHARTER SCHOOL-9

Page 3 of [Exhibit E](#) discusses enhancement unit E-265, a request for a deputy director. The intent of this position is to focus on a number of strategic areas related to the SPCSA. This position would enhance the development of governance and accountability for our charter school boards. It will also provide policy assistance to the director and represent the SPCSA when appropriate.

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Clark County makes up 90 percent of our portfolio of students. This position will be housed in Clark County to increase our presence there.

E-275 Educated and Healthy Citizenry — Page CHARTER SCHOOL-9

Chair Hickey:

One of the SPCSA's missions is to support the Public Charter School Loan Program. This account was started with a \$750,000 General Fund appropriation. The total amount of an individual loan a charter schools can receive is capped at \$200,000 per year. That loan amount is not enough money for a charter school to build a facility.

Please discuss how you were able to fund the Oasis Academy in Fallon and the Founders Academy in Las Vegas. In conjunction with that, discuss your plan for this coming year.

Also, what are your goals in terms of reaching out to schools to make the loans as available as possible?

Mr. Gavin:

Page 5 of [Exhibit E](#) discusses our Public Charter School Loan Program in B/A 101-2708. The Charter School Loan Program was authorized last Session. Through the program, we received a General Fund allocation of \$750,000, which was placed into the previously existing Account for Charter Schools. This account was created by the 2005 Session, but was never funded until last Session. This was the first time in the SPCSA's history as a State agency that there has been a source of money for startup or facilities acquisitions and development. The \$750,000 has been used to make two loans to the two schools you mentioned.

Public Charter School Loan Program — Budget Page CHARTER SCHOOL-13
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Budget Account 101-2708

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Jessica Hoban (Administrative Services Officer, State Public Charter School Authority, Department of Education):

Oasis Academy initially requested \$139,700, but after recalculation it received \$96,639 from the Public Charter School Loan Program and paid off the loan in short order. The Founders Academy has applied and received a \$175,000 loan to be repaid over a 3-year period.

Mr. Gavin:

The statute requires an existing school seeking to expand to begin paying off their initial loan funds immediately. Oasis Academy elected to accelerate their payments because they did not want to pay more interest. Founders Academy, by statute for a new school, is permitted to have 1 full year of operation prior to beginning to pay off the loan. We anticipate that they will begin payments in August 2015.

We are actively working on some challenges with this loan fund. The statute says that the loan is only granted for costs incurred. This means an initial loan must be obtained so there are costs incurred to qualify for the State's Public Charter School Loan Program. This has been a barrier to implementation and has been holding back a number of schools from participating in this.

Since they would have to get a commercial loan first, the schools figure why then go through the process of getting an additional loan from the State and have a larger potential liability on their books with two lines of credit. Another problem is in a regulation passed by the SBE. The regulation requires that the board members of each charter school individually serve as guarantors and be jointly and severally liable for any losses. The combination of those laws and regulations meant that people might wind up with three separate levels of obligation.

There is also a policy concern as the State wants to ensure that no one thinks of a school as their personal piggy bank. Conversely, if they, as school, have a loss then they have to pay for it.

Due to the revenue shortfall in the current fiscal year, this loan fund is also subject to the sweep. A number of our schools recognize that there was only about \$78,000 left in the account after the proposed sweep. Since most of

their needs are significantly higher than that, only a few schools have expressed interest in applying.

Chair Hickey:

I am not aware of the sweep. Can you tell us what happened there?

Chair Kieckhefer:

Mr. Gavin is referring the 2015 end fund balance sweeps that are proposed by the Executive Branch to make sure we shore up our ending fund balance for the current fiscal year.

Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick:

We tried to work with you on the regulations. I do not remember you coming to us about the regulations being problematic on how this program would work. You should have obtained a legal opinion on what the legislative intent of the regulations was. Specific language is needed when we deal with bonding.

Senate Bill No. 384 of the 77th Session addressed how this loan program would work and how charter schools would not be held liable for loans that they were unable to pay back. The charter schools would pay back what they could on the loan and then we would dispose of the buildings if the charter school were unable to repay the loans. Please meet with me to help me understand the regulation issues.

Mr. Gavin:

I will meet with you offline to discuss the loan fund. I want to differentiate between the loan fund and the bonding bill. These two items are separate initiatives.

Assemblywoman Kirkpatrick:

However, they work together.

Mr. Gavin:

With regard to the bonding piece, there have been no issues raised about the language of the bond statute and no concerns expressed by schools in that area. One school is going through the process, went to the Nevada State Board of Finance and passed that hurdle. Another school has had the Department of

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Business and Industry issue bonds on their behalf, which the school will be obligated to pay in the near future.

Chair Kieckhefer:

Please discuss your reserve balance and its breadth moving forward. You anticipate a reserve balance of about \$3.6 million at the end of the biennium. Should your administrative assessment be something less than 1.5 percent?

Mr. Gavin:

We are a young Agency that has experienced significant growth. Our portfolio has doubled in size from FY 2010 to the current fiscal year. Current projects show that we will continue to see rapid growth in future years. We are continuing to evaluate our core functions as an agency and see where we can be more efficient and effective. At some point, we will need additional resources.

There is information related to pending IFC requests which relate to other costs we are incurring this fiscal year, some of which may recur in future years. These costs were misunderstood and could potentially impact us on an ongoing basis. By the time that information comes before the IFC, we will be in a better position to discuss some of those costs and the resulting lower fund balances, both in this current fiscal year and in future years of the biennium.

Chair Kieckhefer:

If you have identified costs that will be recurring in future biennia, you need to let us know as soon as possible so we can build it into the budget. Please meet with staff and discuss recurring costs.

We will now hear public comment.

Victoria Carreón (Guinn Center for Policy Priorities):

Please refer to handout "Guinn Center for Policy Priorities Legislative Testimony Legislative Office of Early Learning and Development Budget" ([Exhibit F](#)).

We focus our comments on the Office of Early Learning and Development's budget and particularly the expanded Pre-K proposal. As the Superintendent of Public Instruction mentioned, the State's Pre-K participation rate is low. The

Guinn Center for Policy Priorities and Nevada Succeeds produced a joint report evaluating all of the Governor's proposed education initiatives, ranking them as high, medium or low. These rankings were based on the strength of the research and the impact on student achievement. The Pre-K initiatives were ranked high because of strong empirical evidence accrued over many years on this subject. High-quality Pre-K programs have been shown to help close the achievement gap and will result in significant savings over the long term.

The HighScope Perry Preschool Study, which follows people for over 40 years after participating in a Pre-K program, found significant positive impacts over the long term. The emphasis needs to be on high-quality Pre-K programs, instruction, professional development and assurance that teachers are licensed and paid the same as their counterparts in other grades. Research indicates these factors can help ensure a high quality program. Studies have shown that the benefits fade by Grade 3 if the program is not of high quality.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction also mentioned the importance of the evaluation in this program. We share that concern and believe having a rigorous evaluation should be a high priority. We recommended that the State funds the match to ensure that we receive the federal funds. Also, part of that investment includes professional development for teachers and leaders in Pre-K. We also recommend the requirement for testing students at the beginning and end of the Pre-K program for skill development and ensuring that there is an annual external evaluation.

Services for English language learners, special education and students eligible for free- and reduced-price lunch should be prioritized first because those children are the most in need.

Margaret Martini:

Several new costly programs and administration and data efforts have been discussed. I did not hear any money going into what is important for the children or dollars being invested in teachers.

Technology is nice to have, but there is no substitute for teacher one-on-one instruction with students. The Pre-K initiatives should be high quality programs

because educational programs are important to be developed within the preschool.

Over the past few years, many of the programs being implemented in schools are social programs. The emphasis is no longer on education, but on social engineering and I object to that. We have social programs outside of the schools.

We have several forms of data collection, but no concrete programs educating our children. There is \$11.9 million to \$24.3 million being budgeted for social work and only \$500,000 to \$600,000 for the AP program. The children in that upper level are being pushed aside for social programs, when AP classes could save children money in college. The balance is not there. A lot of money is being spent on education and no results are being seen.

Massachusetts is at the top of the Nation's education spectrum because they have a proven program and fewer social engineering programs. We should develop our own program and not buy into the national Common Core program or into data gathering. The costs presented today eventually end up burdening local school districts.

John Eppolito:

Last budget meeting, it looked like there was \$46 million for the One-to-One devices that the Governor recommended and \$2 million for broadband. In Los Angeles, they allocated \$500 million for One-to-One devices and \$500 million for the internet infrastructure. I am not sure why Las Vegas would have such better infrastructure that their costs of implementation would be significantly lower.

Some parents in Carson City's schools will not sign that documentation and/or let their children take home devices because the costs to replace them are too high. This is another way low income students are being disadvantaged.

Every student in first grade in Estonia starts to learn programming and coding. Students in Estonia will be better off in the 21st century than our students, who are being given iPads, will be.

The Superintendent of Public Instruction has acknowledged that the ranking of states using the SBAC is down to 14 or 15. About half the states who are still in Common Core have already withdrawn from the government sponsored SBAC tests. Half the states that are still in Common Core have already withdrawn from the testing. Lower income minority children will be hurt the most with these reforms.

I am trying to find out how much we are spending on SBAC tests. I have heard the costs are \$1.3 million to be a member of SBAC. I also heard we almost spent \$1 million for another SBAC-related item. I estimate the cost only for the SBAC tests to be over \$7 million a year. The public could not get a straight answer from the NDE, but you Legislators could.

Even though we have been in the Consortium since 2010, we never voted to use this test definitively until 2014. There was a lawsuit in Missouri which attempted to determine the constitutionality of SBAC. Last month that lawsuit came back and determined that the SBAC was unconstitutional.

The Massachusetts standards are proven, free and not copywritten. These standards were ignored when the new standards were written. We are throwing a lot of money at standards which are not proven. After 3 years of using the new standards, Massachusetts's literacy for kids in Grade 3 fell more than any other state in the Country.

There was also a huge controversy with the Partnership of Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) and with Pearson. The PARCC was monitoring children during their tests, at all times during the testing window. In New Jersey, Pearson was monitoring kids after school. A student posted something on their social media account about the test. Pearson brought the issue up to the State Department of Education in New Jersey, and the superintendent went to the parents of the child. The parents got mad because the school was monitoring their child after hours. The American Federation of Teachers has now come out against Pearson and PARCC for these incidences.

The SBAC suggested that local schools monitor the social media accounts of students during the entire window of SBAC testing last year. When Governor Jim Gibbons signed us on to receive ARRA funds of about

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\$266 million, what we agreed to was improving our standards and improving our student data tracking capabilities using the Nevada Statewide Longitudinal Data System. Since then, Governor Gibbons has come out against these reforms from Common Core.

The SAIN's data fields focus on discipline and psychiatric evaluations. I am curious how the SAIN meshes with 400 data points that the National Center for Education Statistics says we should be collecting in the U.S.

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Chair Kieckhefer:

If there is no other further public comment, or business before the Subcommittees, this meeting is adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Jason Gortari,
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Senator Ben Kieckhefer, Chair

DATE: _____

Assemblyman Pat Hickey, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBIT SUMMARY				
Bill	Exhibit		Witness or Agency	Description
	A	2		Agenda
	B	5		Attendance Roster
	C	73	Dale Erquiaga	The Executive Budget Department Of Education 2015 to 2017 Biennium
	D	2	Dale Erquiaga	Nevada Department Of Education New Positions By Program
	E	5	Patrick Gavin	State Pubic Charter School Authority
	F	2	Margaret Martini	Guinn Center For Policy Priorities Legislative Testimony Office Of Early Learning And Development Budget