

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

**Eighty-First Session
February 11, 2021**

The Committee on Education was called to order by Chair Shannon Bilbray-Axelrod at 1:37 p.m. on Thursday, February 11, 2021, Online. Copies of the minutes, including the Agenda ([Exhibit A](#)), the Attendance Roster ([Exhibit B](#)), and other substantive exhibits, are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau and on the Nevada Legislature's website at www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/81st2021.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Shannon Bilbray-Axelrod, Chair
Assemblywoman Brittney Miller, Vice Chair
Assemblywoman Bea Duran
Assemblyman Edgar Flores
Assemblywoman Michelle Gorelow
Assemblywoman Alexis Hansen
Assemblywoman Melissa Hardy
Assemblywoman Lisa Krasner
Assemblywoman Elaine Marzola
Assemblyman Richard McArthur
Assemblywoman Rochelle T. Nguyen
Assemblywoman Jill Tolles
Assemblywoman Selena Torres

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

None

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Kristi Robusto, Committee Policy Analyst
Amanda Marincic, Committee Counsel
Sarah Baker, Committee Secretary
Melissa Loomis, Committee Assistant



OTHERS PRESENT:

Jhone Ebert, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education
Sarah Nick, Management Analyst, Department of Education
Jessica Todtman, Chief Strategy Officer, Department of Education
Nathan Trenholm, representing Data Insight Partners, LLC
Christopher Daly, representing Nevada State Education Association

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

[Roll was called. Committee rules and protocol were explained]. We have two presentations today. We will hear from the Nevada Department of Education (DOE) with their annual report on the state of public education and the statewide plan for improvement of pupils. We will then have a presentation from Data Insight Partners, LLC on Nevada's class sizes and educator workforce. I will open the meeting to public comment. Public comment will be limited to ten minutes at the beginning of today's meeting. An additional opportunity to make public comment will be available at the end of the meeting. Please remember to clearly state and spell your name, and limit your comments to two minutes. [There was none].

I would like to invite Ms. Ebert to begin the first presentation.

Jhone Ebert, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education:

I am joined this afternoon by Jessica Todtman, as well as Sarah Nick, who will be participating in the presentation. I know you have 100 slides before you [[Exhibit C](#)], but I will tell you, we are not going through all 100, we just want to make sure you have the data you need for the annual report.

This afternoon, we are going to be sharing a combined presentation on the 2020 Statewide Plan for the Improvement of Pupils (STIP) and the annual report [page 2, [Exhibit C](#)]. I am able to do this because the reporting requirements for the STIP and the annual report are based on the same accountability data. I also want to note that Senate Bill 76, known as the Education Agility Act, proposes several streamlining efforts to maximize our work. One of the key recommendations is that the STIP would take the place of the annual report requirements and make a more holistic and informed view of the state status of education.

When I first returned home to Nevada and realized that we were going to go through our process looking at the STIP, it was very important to visit every single school district in our state [page 3]. I had the pleasure of working in the Clark County School District for 25 years. I worked with my colleagues across the state, but I had not spent time listening to the voices across the state. I was joined by Deputy Gonzales, Deputy Moore, and Deputy Haartz as we toured the state. It was great to hear from our constituents and those we serve. I will tell you, being from Clark County originally, there is that tendency to say Clark County School District, Washoe County School District, and the rurals. I am here to tell you they are

not one group; they are unique in everything they have to offer their students and their learning contacts. It is very beautiful to see how they achieve the same goals and expectations that we have for all of our students.

We met with teachers, superintendents, cabinet members, board members, parents, and the community. I know some of the legislators here joined in on some of those, listening to our meetings. An important takeaway was that our students clearly articulated what they wanted to see for their education. They wanted to have a licensed math teacher before them. Some of the students even asked for a longer school day and longer year because they care about their education and enjoy it so much.

The families also asked for additional career and technical education courses, such as art, music, and other things that expand beyond the core courses. Parents want to be informed and they want to be involved. School boards were asking for more transparency and predictability in school funding.

Our teachers were candid about the pressures they face every day in the classroom. They are committed to the communities and the support they have from their communities. They also wanted to see expanded support from the leaders within our state.

These are the major components that played a role in the development of our STIP [page 4]. Every single staff member within the Department had a hand and a voice in the culmination of this. We also asked superintendents to weigh in. Our own State Board of Education weighed in several times. It was taken to them four times prior to final approval.

I would like to take a moment to talk about our values [page 5]. The accountability report, as well as our STIP, is due in March of every year. As you know, it was a year ago when the pandemic hit. All of this work was prior to the pandemic. However, as we went through the pandemic, what grounded the entire team were the values we came to as we brought this work together. First and foremost is our equity value. You see access to quality, success, inclusivity, community, and transparency in all of our work, and that has defined us as we have moved forward.

The next two slides [pages 6 and 7] show our six goals. We used to have 12 objectives, but what we noted as a team is that each of the objectives was really built upon a specific team. We had an objective that had to do with educators. That team worked with our teachers and teacher effectiveness and was in charge of that goal. We have Pre-K standards. It was very siloed, so we were very intentional in these next six goals you see. It is every single team member across the Department; the State Board of Education leading this and making sure we all see ourselves in every single goal.

I am going to turn the time over to Sarah Nick, who is going to demonstrate how the entire STIP is laid out. She will then turn it over to our chief strategy officer, Jessica Todtman.

Sarah Nick, Management Analyst, Department of Education:

This slide [page 8] shows how our values and goals come together to drive the Department's work. Where each goal intersects with a value, there is a strategy, like the example you see on the slide. We also developed inputs, outputs, and outcomes [page 9] that represent our implementation plan for the STIP. In the spirit of transparency, for the first time, STIP publishes what the DOE will be doing, along with our stakeholders, to accomplish our goals and strategies. Now that we have introduced the STIP's organizational framework, we will tour through each of the STIP goals with relevant data as required by the annual report.

Our very first goal relates to early childhood learning where our investment has the highest return [page 10]. Investing in early care and education is important because the circumstances of the first 1,000 days of a child's life can change the course of their future. On many stops of the listening tour, we had the opportunity to observe high-quality early education, as well as to hear directly from parents and families about Pre-K access as a gamechanger in their communities.

Initiatives including full-day kindergarten, Read by Grade 3, and Nevada Silver State Stars Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) have been instrumental to improve the quality of early education in Nevada [page 11]. In addition, the Silver State Stars QRIS informs families and parents regarding care choices and what high quality truly means.

To support our efforts around equity and accountability, also in accordance with the federal Every Student Succeeds Act, Nevada reports student data disaggregated by race and ethnicity [page 12], as well as special population status, which includes students with disabilities or differently abled students, students who are English learners, and students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. As of 2018-2019, we also include data for students experiencing homelessness, foster youth, and military connected students.

Research shows that the single most important in-school determinate of student success is the quality of teaching [page 13]. Goal 2 reflects the importance of all students having access to effective educators, which informs the supply pipeline we need to create with educator preparation programs, as well as our work with public schools and districts and regional professional development programs to design resources for educators.

Student enrollment in K-12 public schools has grown by nearly a 15 percent increase in students in just ten years [page 14]. Our student population has been changing rapidly over the past ten years. The percentages of students who identify as black, students who identify as Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, and students who identify with two or more races have increased, while percentages of students who identify as American Indian or Asian have decreased slightly. Today, over 40 percent of Nevada's students identify as Hispanic, while white students make up just over 30 percent of the student population. In addition, 14 percent of students are English learners and over 65 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch.

This table [page 15] demonstrates that the self-reported race/ethnicity of Nevada's teachers does not currently reflect the demographics of our students. For example, while only 28 percent of Nevada's students identify as white, 81 percent of Nevada's teachers identify as white. This problem is not unique to the Silver State. While approximately 50 percent of P-12 students in the United States are young people of color, approximately 80 percent of the current U.S. teacher force is, by societal definitions, white. Recruiting and retaining a diverse group of highly effective educators is essential to our efforts to ensure that all students experience continued academic growth and graduate globally prepared.

I would like to note that Goal 3 articulates our commitment to support student achievement with a focus on growth [page 16]. We acknowledge that all learners come to school with different assets and opportunities. Our job as educators is to meet students where they are and encourage their growth on the path to becoming lifelong learners.

The 2020 Annual Report of Accountability looked very different from prior years. Due to the circumstances of COVID-19, the DOE applied for and received approval for a federal accountability waiver and worked with the Governor to remove state assessment requirements for the 2019-2020 school year [page 17]. This means that districts and schools were not required to administer anticipated assessments and meet reporting requirements, including the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), End of Course Exams (EOC), Measure of Academic Progress (MAP), and the Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF).

Smarter Balanced exams [page 18] are taken each spring by all students in grades 3 through 8 as a federal requirement to assess their acquisition of skills and knowledge in English language arts and mathematics [page 19]. Statewide, students in all grades improved in mathematics proficiency from the 2018-2019 school year over the previous year. Grades 4, 6, and 7 made the largest percentage point gains in mathematics proficiency for this assessment year.

I will now turn our time over to Jessica Todtman, who will finish the tour of our STIP goals.

Jessica Todtman, Chief Strategy Officer, Department of Education:

Based on the valuable feedback gathered during the listening tour, the theme of the 2020 STIP is Battle Born Globally Prepared [page 20]. Globally Prepared is represented in Goal 4 and encapsulates what our students need to be future ready, whatever the next few decades may hold. The strategies in Goal 4 ensure our students graduate with the tools they need to build a home, a life, and a future.

Of course, graduation looked and felt a little different for our Class of 2020 due to COVID-19 [page 21]. Based on the recommendations of a workgroup of stakeholders that we convened, and with the support of the Governor, we also issued a waiver of the civics assessment as a graduation requirement. We wanted to ensure that no student faced an undue burden in receiving the diploma they had earned.

The next slide [page 22] shows the top-level highlights of the Class of 2020 graduation rates. Thanks to the work of our amazing students, educators, and staff, Nevada had a graduation rate of over 80 percent for the fourth year in a row. The rate fell slightly from prior years, but we had 13 districts with rates exceeding the state average, and 5 districts with rates over 90 percent.

The Nevada Department of Education is committed to addressing gaps between and among student groups as reflected in our STIP values and strategies [page 23]. Slide 45 [page 45] of this presentation's appendix shows how we hone in on disaggregated data on opportunity gaps. Expanding equitable access to high-quality learning opportunities and effective educators are key to putting all learners on paths to long-term success.

This slide [page 24] shows graduation rates for students from special populations, including those who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, those who are differently abled, who are English learners, who are experiencing homelessness, and foster youth.

The strategies that support Goal 5 [page 25] ensure that the state's investment in education is efficient and effective and supports the students' success. Each strategy focuses on fully expending available funding, proactively managing funds through technical assistance and monitoring, and improving our customer service. As you know, Nevada's public schools and districts are currently funded by the Nevada Plan, which does not adequately account for demographic and socioeconomic differences among our increasingly diverse student body.

Senate Bill 543 of the 80th Session laid the groundwork for the development of the new Pupil-Centered Funding Plan to address the current and future needs of our children [page 26]. The Commission on School Funding has identified four concepts that are the basis for their work, which closely align with our STIP values and lead with equity first.

This slide [page 27] summarizes the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan as laid out in S.B. 543 of the 80th Session. Revenue sources that were previously funding over 80 distinct programs are now combined into the State Education Account and distributed through the tier progression on the right side of the slide. This approach advances equity and transparency and supports districts and schools in tailoring support to the unique needs of their students. For example, rather than a student who is an English learner only receiving funding if their school has enough English learners to qualify for Zoom, they will now receive extra support through weighted funding no matter where they attend school. The money follows the student.

This slide [page 28] shows the shifts in the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan that are included in the Governor's recommended budget. The Governor has recommended a phased implementation approach to ensure the equity and transparency that are the core of this work, while allowing flexibility given the current circumstances. The phased approach includes an implementation of the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan during the 2021-2023 biennium for state revenues that are currently distributed through the Department, which includes base funding, as well as state-funded grants. The second phase will begin in 2023-2025, when local

revenues will be combined with state revenues as part of the full implementation. This delay in combining state and local revenues will allow school districts to manage resources to meet the needs of their communities as we continue to navigate our pandemic response and resulting economic uncertainties.

Another aspect of our work that is key to Goal 5 is financial transparency [page 29]. The federal Every Student Succeeds Act included a financial transparency requirement that we were proud to convene a workgroup to implement in the Nevada Report Card. The Department was already reporting funding amounts for instruction, instructional support, operations, and leadership. The data were broken down by funding amount and percentage by state, district, and school. In response to federal requirements, the data are now further broken down by personnel expenditures, which includes salaries and benefits and non-personnel, which includes all other costs related to providing an education to students [page 30]. Appendix I of the presentation [page 88] provides step-by-step instructions on accessing the financial data on the Nevada Report Card.

Our final goal, Goal 6, focuses on providing safe learning and working environments where identities and relationships are valued and celebrated [page 31]. In 2015, the Office for a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment was established at the Nevada Department of Education. This prioritizes the safety and well-being of students and adults in our schools. We know that if students do not feel safe and valued, they will struggle to grow and succeed academically. In addition, promoting emotional and physical safety for educators means Nevada is more likely to retain them.

In 2018, the Statewide School Safety Task Force was convened and tasked with making recommendations captured in Senate Bill 89 of the 80th Session [page 32]. One of those recommendations was disaggregating discipline data. The results here represent the first time these data have been reported by student group. Going from right to left, the green columns represent the percentage of total enrollment for each of the seven major race and ethnicity categories of students. The yellow columns represent the percentage of total suspensions experienced by the group of students. The blue column is a percentage of total expulsions for that student group.

The rates of expulsion and suspension are not proportional to enrollment for many of our student groups, and the disproportionality is most drastic for our students who identify as black, who are expelled at rates more than three times their enrollment rate.

The next slide [page 33] is disaggregated by special populations, where we see the most stark disproportionality among special populations of students who are receiving special education services. During the 2019 school year, those students were expelled or suspended at rates of one and a half times higher than their proportion of enrollment.

Assembly Bill 490 of the 80th Session requires regular updates on this discipline data to the State Board of Education. It also requires the Department to support schools through training and professional development on generating and interpreting these types of reports, as well as developing a responsive plan of action for addressing trends in disproportionality. We are currently working with a group of stakeholders from across the state to create and provide these supports. We look forward to giving an update in the future.

Another lane through which we assess learning environments is the school climate survey [page 34], which has been administered since 2015. The Department has worked closely with stakeholders to develop resources and tools to make accessing and using the results easy and useful. You can see the links provided on the slide, where you can access a peer matching tool, as well as an interactive data tool, that allow users to explore and compare detailed results.

Because the state's climate survey includes items from the national school climate survey, we are able to benchmark against students' perceptions nationally and use different conditions here to identify most favorable, favorable, and least favorable for each of these four climate constructs [page 35]. As you can see, the statewide results have been improving in all categories over the past five years. It is important to note here the large difference between students' perceptions of their emotional safety versus those of their physical safety, which indicates a need to continue to invest in increased mental health and social emotional supports.

Before we conclude, I want to provide a very brief overview of some other aspects of our COVID-19 response [page 36], which has significantly affected education over the past 8 to 11 months. When the Nevada Department of Education began to organize in response to the public health crisis, we worked with the State Board of Education to identify priorities that have guided all of our work and response. You can see here that equity is leading among our priorities [page 37].

The Governor's responsiveness during uncertainty allowed the Department and our schools to provide necessary guidance and support to students, staff, and families. The six emergency directives listed here [page 38] address the phase of our response beginning with school building closures and culminating with support and guidance for reopening school buildings this fall.

We are committed to providing guidance, flexibility, and resources to districts, schools, and families to navigate this time [page 39]. All of our guidance was seen through the lens of what would support success for students and educators. Our path forward plan, along with our resources, was developed with feedback from community partners and public health experts.

In addition to accountability and distance learning guidance, we provided specific support to districts and schools to help them in servicing students who were most in need of their help, including those who are differently abled and those who are English learners [page 40].

As the Superintendent said at the beginning, I want to note that there are many more slides here that share some accountability data, but we wanted to be concise for the purpose of your agenda today. We would be happy to take your questions at this time.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

Thank you for your presentation. We have a few questions from the members.

Assemblywoman Nguyen:

I am wondering what kind of guidance the Nevada Department of Education has released for school reopenings.

Jhone Ebert:

There are several documents linked to the slide deck that was just presented [page 39, [Exhibit C](#)]. The first one we released in multiple languages was called "The Path Forward." It includes several components that you see implemented and practiced in several of our school districts. Health and safety, including social and emotional, was at the top of our work, and then all the various components.

Assemblywoman Torres:

I would like to thank you, Superintendent, and your team for all the work you have been doing over the last couple of months. I know it has been particularly challenging, as education has truly transformed in just the last year. My question is regarding English language learners and a follow-up to Assembly Bill 219 of the 80th Session, which said our Nevada assessments would be available in other languages. I am wondering if we could get an update on that. Obviously, I understand the Department is hoping the assessments will not take place this year, but what work has been done to secure contracts to ensure those assessments will be available?

Jhone Ebert:

As noted in A.B. 219 of the 80th Session, we want to be able to move forward with the SBAC assessment. It is available in two languages. When we went to work with the contractors, funding was not made available to administer it in multiple languages this year. We are not quite sure at this time if we will be administering those assessments. It is our intent to continue to move forward to identify those funds to be able to offer those assessments in multiple languages, not just two.

Assemblywoman Torres:

If I remember correctly from the last session, the contract was about to expire. I am wondering when the new contract will be created and if at least a couple of languages will be included.

Jhone Ebert:

We will be doing a new request for proposal (RFP), and negotiating a contract as well, in two years, but that does not stop us, if funds are made available, to be able to move forward. At this point in time, we are currently working with our Read by Grade 3 assessment tool that went out to RFP. We are working on purchasing our College and Career Readiness Assessment, which is the next RFP we will do, and after that will be the full SBAC. It is a staggered process year over year.

Assemblywoman Torres:

Could you send us any information you have on the pass rate for the SBAC in all subjects for our English language learners? It is my understanding now that our English language learners do not do particularly well in math or science SBACs, despite English not being the skill that is assessed. I just want to make sure we are capturing accurate data for our English language learners and I would like to review those numbers as well.

Jhone Ebert:

I would be more than happy to provide you with those numbers.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

Would you send those numbers to Committee staff to make sure all members get that information? Are there any further questions? [There were none]. I know we have talked to superintendents throughout the state, and obviously you have as well. I am wondering if you could provide an aggregate picture of the number of students we have not been able to locate because of COVID-19. I know most counties are at least doing hybrid learning or have gone back to in-person learning totally. I know Clark County School District is still completely virtual. I am wondering if we have an entire state number of students we have not been able to locate in order to get them back to the education system this year.

Jhone Ebert:

I just want to make sure I am answering your question correctly. Are you asking for the total enrollment across the state and do we have as many students participating in education, or are you asking for an overview of how all 17 school districts are educating?

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

I am wondering if we have a percentage of students that are unaccounted for.

Jhone Ebert:

Across the entire state, we did see a drop in enrollment of about 2 percent. That varies based on the school districts. We have several school districts where the families were opting to homeschool their children during the pandemic. What has been wonderful is our superintendents have been working very hard in those school districts that are fully face to face, and have been offering learning at a distance, so there is parent choice in that

realm. Where we see the largest dip in enrollment is with kindergarteners. With those children, I believe it is around a 10 percent drop in enrollment from year over year. Right now, we speculate two things: the first is that as a state we do not require kindergarten, and two, the pandemic and families keeping their younger children at home.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

Are we anticipating that these children will go to kindergarten next year or first grade? First grade is regulated in Nevada.

Jhone Ebert:

I appreciate that question, but I am going to expand it a little bit. During the pandemic, we know we have had several families and children that have been able to accelerate their learning. They are in an environment where they have resources. As an example, perhaps their mother is an English teacher, so they have accelerated in their reading as a fourth grader. In other areas, we know families with minimal resources have not had the same opportunities, so they are not accelerating through education, and it is actually a K-curve.

We have set up a blue-ribbon commission, which Assemblywoman Tolles is part of. We are looking at moving away, especially during the pandemic, from saying strictly chronological age. If a child is eight years old, we would place him in third-grade curriculum. What we need to do is understand where our children are when they return to a face-to-face environment. I will also add, some of them may not return to a face-to-face environment because they love being at a distance. They are thriving and have learned that learning at a distance is a great thing. As we all evolve, the adults and the children in the system, meeting the children where they are is critical.

I will round it back to your original question regarding the kindergarteners. We may see some who are ready and charge into that first-grade classroom because of the exposure and experiences they have had. We will have others who may not be ready. We, as the adults in the room, need to be ready to meet those children where they are. It is going to be a large continuum working with the superintendents across the state to make sure we address and meet the children where they are. We will accelerate them through their learning if they need accelerating, or take them to the next level beyond their chronological age and grade and curriculum.

Assemblywoman Miller:

When we refer to the numbers regarding the lower enrollment across the state this year, I think we can all agree there are probably some obvious anecdotal reasons why we see a reduction in kindergarten. I know from the experience the state had in 2011, and from my own experiences with my own students this year and the conversations, there are a lot of people who are physically leaving Nevada because, of course, people need work and perhaps live with family members who may be in another state because finances are dictating what

needs to happen. By the same token, I know I have been teaching my students virtually, and they are in different states and, in some cases, different countries. The idea is that they will return to Nevada. Do we have a handle on how many of the students are not enrolled anymore? They are not all just homeschooled. Do we know where they are and how many there are because they physically left the state or left the district, moving somewhere else in the state?

Jhone Ebert:

We do not drill down on each individual child. That would be at the district level. We have the aggregate data for school districts and grade levels. However, those individual children you are talking about, that is not data we collect at the state level. We just know if they have enrolled or unenrolled and moved to another state. That would be the 2 percent reduction overall.

Assemblywoman Miller:

Would it be known whether those children have left the state if they identified that they moved?

Jhone Ebert:

Yes. We would have aggregate data. I would need to check with my team on the specific districts.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

I do want to let everyone know that the annual reports are also on the Nevada Electronic Legislative Information System (NELIS) [[Exhibit D](#)]. We are really trying to do everything we can to provide information to folks watching virtually. Everything we discuss or mention, you can find in those annual reports as well. Thank you, Superintendent Ebert and team, and we look forward to working with you this legislative session.

[[Exhibit E](#) was submitted but not discussed].

We will move on to the second presentation. I believe Superintendent Ebert will be introducing the next presenters for Nevada class size and educator workforce.

Jhone Ebert:

Thank you for allowing us to be here to present this information. Your colleagues here are great, asking those questions regarding data. That is one of the questions we asked as a team. Deputy Gonzales leads our work with educator effectiveness. About a year ago we said we needed data, we cannot just go by what we have heard or think. I know there are great brains out there, but being a mathematician, I love to have data. We used part of our Title II-A federal funds to contract with Data Insight Partners, LLC to answer these questions that you are going to receive some insight into.

Here again, there is a large stack of paper for you to refer to at a later time [[Exhibit F](#)]. I know we are time-bound this morning, but this is a great presentation that has historical data that will show trends within our workforce, and also how you, as legislators, have supported education in the past. We have seen great strides because of that support. I would like to turn the time over to Nathan Trenholm to share what we have learned through the data collected across the state over years.

Nathan Trenholm, representing Data Insight Partners, LLC:

Data Insight Partners is a small business in Las Vegas, Nevada. We work with schools, districts, state departments of education, and nonprofits in the education sector. We are extremely humbled and grateful for the opportunity to share with you our analysis on Nevada class sizes and the teacher workforce. This work is near and dear to our hearts, especially because we actually have kids in the K-12 system in the public schools here in Nevada. Before I get started, I want to give a big thank you to the Nevada Department of Education for their support in this work under the leadership of Superintendent Ebert, as well as the leadership of Deputy Superintendent Felicia Gonzales and her team, who have been instrumental in supporting this project over the last year.

What you will see today is a report that summarizes over a billion data points spanning two decades of information, coming from sources such as the U.S. Department of Education and multiple systems in the Nevada Department of Education, as well as local school districts and charter schools. This was a massive undertaking that culminated in thousands of pages that was condensed down to a 170-page summary, which you have as an exhibit to this agenda item [[Exhibit F](#)]. However, we will not be going through all 170 pages today. We will give you a highlight, but if you have the opportunity, I strongly recommend you take the time to review all 170 pages. Honestly, this is one of the most important and impressive pieces of work I have ever had the opportunity to contribute to.

When you look at education data, a critical question needing to be asked and investigated first is, What happens when Nevada makes strategic investments in education [[page 2](#), [Exhibit F](#)]? The most recent major investment was toward early literacy [[page 3](#)]. Over about the last seven years, hundreds of millions of dollars were directed toward early literacy through the programs full-day kindergarten, class size reduction, Zoom schools, Victory schools, and Read by Grade 3. Not all of this money was specifically for early literacy, but a huge portion of this money was directed toward early literacy.

As it happens, the federal government tests the nation's fourth graders in reading every two years. They use an assessment called the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) [[page 4](#)]. It is the largest assessment in the country and is considered the gold standard of student assessments. Any time you see any type of educational rankings, the NAEP is the assessment that is at the core of those rankings.

What we see on this slide [page 5] is the national average reading scores for fourth graders from 2003 to 2009. The next slide [page 6] is Nevada's fourth graders over that time. Prior to this massive investment in early literacy, Nevada's fourth graders were consistently performing academically a year behind their national peers.

In 2019, the first cohort that had exposure from kindergarten through fourth grade to these massive investments in early literacy took the NAEP fourth-grade reading test [page 7]. What happened when this cohort, who had the exposure to investment, when they were finally tested in fourth-grade reading? For the first time ever, Nevada's fourth graders performed in-line with their national peers [page 8]. Prior to the investment, fourth graders were performing academically a year behind their national peers. You do not have to take my word for it. We can look at this screen shot [page 9] from the U.S. Department of Education's website. It says the 2019 average scale score for Nevada is not significantly different from the national public.

Here is another screen shot [page 10] that ranks states in their improvements in fourth-grade reading from 2009 to 2019. What you see is only three states in the entire country improved faster than Nevada's fourth graders. Our fourth graders have been improving significantly faster than their national peers over the last decade.

What happens when we make strategic investments in education in Nevada? Student outcomes improve [page 11]. Nevada education is a system worth investing in.

Now that we know that, what is the biggest threat to the academic gains our students have made [page 12]? What we know is the most important factor affecting student learning is the classroom teacher [page 13]. What we do not know is how reliable is every student's access to a quality teacher in a reasonable class size [page 14].

Before we answer that question, I want to go over some context for our review [page 15], local headlines around this subject over the last few years. In 2016, Nevada declared a teacher shortage emergency [page 16]. In 2018, a study showed that Nevada's schools had the largest average class sizes in the country [page 17]. Just this last November, there was an emergency so that substitutes with only a high school diploma could be hired [page 18].

We know we have a massive problem here in Nevada regarding our teacher shortage. The purpose of today's analysis is to ask some strategic questions so we can get more specific about the scope of this problem and our obstacles to solving it. The strategic questions we are going to investigate today include, What are the actual class sizes our students are experiencing? How many teachers do we need? Do students have equitable access to teachers? What obstacles do we face in solving these problems [page 22]? Another way to think about that is to say, "Where are we, where do we want to be, are those differences equitable, and what are the obstacles we have to overcome to solve this?"

The first question we will explore is, What are the actual class sizes our students are experiencing? This chart [page 25] shows the class sizes for core classes for first through fifth grades, and the core classes in secondary for English, math, science, and history from the last school year. The way you can read this is, the average second grader in Nevada had a class size of 20. The average secondary student had a history class size of 30. The recommended class size in Nevada for grades 1 through 3 is 15. The recommended class size for grades 4 through 12 is 25 [page 26]. These recommendations were set by the State Board of Education in 2018.

We are going to take those recommendations and superimpose them on this chart [page 27]. We see that all the averages are larger than the recommended class sizes. However, the million-dollar question is, How many students is this impacting [page 28]? How many students were in a class size larger than the recommended class size? I will let you think about that for a second. Do you think it was less than 100,000? Do you think it was 100,000 to 200,000? Do you think it was 200,000 to 300,000 or more than 300,000 students? The answer is more than 300,000 students. There were 374,424 students sitting in a core class last year larger than the recommended class size. That is 87 percent of all students [page 31]. In other words, about 9 in 10 students had a class size larger than the recommended class size last year.

That is where we are. Where do we want to be? How many teachers will we need to meet the recommended class sizes? Currently, for just the core classes in grades 1 through 5, we have about 8,300 teachers [page 34]. To get to the recommended class sizes, we would need over 2,000 more teachers. For the core subjects in secondary, we would need almost another 1,000 teachers. If we want to get the core classes down to the recommended class sizes, we will need over 3,000 teachers today.

That can sound like a huge number, 3,000 teachers, because we are used to hearing about teacher shortages and how many vacancies there are. Clark County has 300 teacher vacancies, so how can we say we have 300 teacher vacancies but we need 3,000 teachers? Teacher vacancies is a function of how many funded positions are empty. It is a different question to say, How many teachers do we need? To verify that this is actually a very conservative estimate, we can look at national student-teacher ratios [page 36].

Currently, the average in the country is there is a classroom teacher for every 14.9 students, so a teacher for every 15 students. In Vermont, where they have the lowest ratio, they have a teacher for every 10.5 students. How many teachers would we need in Nevada to meet these system-wide ratios? To just meet the average, Nevada would need almost 10,000 more teachers today. That is just to be average. If Nevada wants to lead the nation in staffing, we will need another 23,678 teachers [page 37].

To summarize what we just looked at, just to improve core classes, we need over 3,000 teachers [page 38]. To improve the entire system to staff at a national average, we need almost 10,000 more teachers. If Nevada wants to lead the nation, we will need over 23,000 more teachers today.

We have looked at where we are and where we want to be. Now the question is, Are these differences equitable across student groups? Do all students have equitable access to teachers? To investigate this question, we are going to plot the average classroom experience for students in grades 1 through 3 by student ethnicity [page 40]. Later, when I show the dots along the x-axis, left to right, that is going to measure their average class size. The farther to the left of that, the smaller the class size. Along the vertical, up and down, that is a measure of their access to experienced teachers. How many of those students have an experienced teacher leading their classroom? The higher the dot, the more experienced the teacher is [page 41]. We want to be in the green, which are smaller class sizes and more experienced teachers. In the red, there are larger class sizes and less experienced teachers.

Here are the experiences for our first and third graders last year [page 42]. You will notice on the bottom, left-hand corner [page 43], black and Hispanic students have slightly smaller classes sizes, but they have significantly less access to experienced teachers. A white student is about 30 percent more likely to have an experienced teacher than a black student [page 44]. The trade off is about 1.5 students per classroom.

Does that same pattern exist for fourth through fifth grade [page 45]? The answer is that it does. Again, now a white student is about 45 percent more likely to have an experienced teacher than a black student. The tradeoff now is less than 1 student per classroom [page 47].

Does the same pattern exist for secondary students? It does [page 50]. You may notice in secondary levels, all students have more access to experienced teachers because at the secondary level, teachers are less likely to switch grade levels and subjects in schools. However, the same pattern exists, which is that black and Hispanic students have slightly smaller class sizes, but they have significantly less access to experienced teachers.

It is one thing that they have disparate access [page 51], the next question is, Is this disparate access associated with disparate student outcomes? To investigate this question, we are going to look at the same type of plot, but now we are going to plot schools by star rating. Again, we are looking at the secondary level [page 54]. What we see is that students in 5-Star schools have significantly higher access to experienced teachers and they have slightly larger class sizes. If you are in a 5-Star school at the secondary level, there is a 3 in 4 chance you have an experienced teacher. If you are in a 1-Star school, there is only a 1 in 3 chance you have an experienced teacher. You are twice as likely to have an experienced teacher in a 5-Star school than you are in a 1-Star school.

Does that same pattern exist for the elementary level? It does [page 57]. Again, if you are in a 5-Star school, you more than likely have an experienced teacher. If you are in a 1-Star school, there is only a 1 in 3 chance you have an experienced teacher.

If 1-Star and 2-Star schools have smaller class sizes, should we expect higher achievement from these schools since they have smaller class sizes? To investigate this, we can look at what the research tells us [page 59]. This is a summary of class size research from Brown Center on Education Policy at Brookings. The first summary is for a class size reduction

study done in Tennessee in the 1980s. This is the most famous study on class sizes that was ever done. It was a statewide, randomized controlled study. They found when they reduced class sizes from 22 down to 15, a 32 percent reduction in class sizes, they saw an increase in student achievement.

This slide [page 60] is a summary of subsequent research that validated those findings. The research shows very large class-size reductions, on the order of magnitude of 7 to 10 fewer students per class, can have significant, long-term effects on student achievement and other meaningful outcomes. Now we need to look at what is happening in our schools [page 61]. Looking at the 1-Star and 2-Star schools, unlike the study in Tennessee, they are not sitting in class sizes of 15, they are sitting in class sizes of 21 and 22, which were large class sizes in the Tennessee study.

Additionally, when we compare class sizes in 1-Star and 2-Star schools to the 4-Star and 5-Star schools [page 62], the difference is 2 to 4 students, not the 7 to 10 students that the research says is required. We do not have a difference in class sizes here that would be required for us to expect a high improvement in student outcomes.

Finally, the students do not have the same access to experienced teachers [page 63]. Students in the 1-Star and 2-Star schools have significantly less access to experienced teachers than do students in 4-Star and 5-Star schools.

To summarize [page 64], black and Hispanic students have significantly less access to experienced teachers compared to their Asian and Caucasian peers. Students in 1-Star and 2-Star schools have significantly lower access to experienced teachers. Despite the slightly smaller class sizes, the research says it is not a large enough difference to expect improved student outcomes.

Next, what are the obstacles we face to improve these issues? First, we are going to explore the educator preparation pipeline [page 66]. When I say the educator preparation pipeline, I am talking about programs people go through so they can be eligible for a teacher license. This could be a four-year program in education at a university, or it could be an alternative route to licensure. What we are going to do is compare these pipelines across all the states in the country. To make it an apples-to-apples comparison, we are going to look at this as a ratio of the students that each state serves. We are going to look at the number of education preparation graduates for every 1,000 students a state serves.

What you see on this chart [page 68] is every state ranked from top to bottom. On average, a state puts out three program completers for every 1,000 students they serve. At the top of this chart [page 69], we have Vermont. They are putting out almost six program completers for every 1,000 students they serve. That is not surprising, as earlier we just saw Vermont has the lowest teacher ratios in the country. Where is Nevada [page 71]? We are down at the bottom. We have about half the national average. We are putting out about 1.6 program completers for every 1,000 students we serve.

The ramification of this, as noted in the Teacher Workforce Report [page 72], is that Nevada relies on over 60 percent of its new teachers to come from preparation programs outside of Nevada. If we are relying so heavily on external programs, we will need to know what is happening with that national pipeline. This chart [page 73] is the national pipeline over the last decade. United States teacher preparation program graduates have dropped by over 30 percent over the last decade. That is not just as a ratio to students, that is actual total numbers. Graduates went from 216,000 down to 150,000 nationally over that decade. This pipeline is significantly and consistently shrinking over time.

To summarize [page 74], Nevada's teacher pipeline significantly lags national averages. We rely on out-of-state teacher preparation programs for over 60 percent of our new teachers. In addition, the national pipeline we are relying on is significantly and consistently shrinking over time. Nevada's pipeline is not expanding at a rate fast enough to make up for the shrinking national pipeline.

The next obstacle we face that we are going to go into today is teacher retention and attrition. If the pipeline is shrinking, are we at least doing a better job at retaining our teachers? We are going to classify classroom teachers at the end of the year into one of three categories [page 112]. They are either a stayer, a mover, or a leaver. A stayer is someone who stays in the classroom at the same school year over year. A mover is someone who continues to teach in the classroom, but they move to another school. A leaver is someone who no longer stays in the classroom at all—they have left the classroom teaching profession.

This is the methodology that is used by the U.S. Department of Education so we can look at national data that they have put out [page 118]. The most recent data spans 1989 through 2013. We can look at the leaver rate of what it looks like nationally, that is, what percent of classroom teachers leave classroom teaching every year? Over this time frame, it ranged from 5.1 percent to 8.4 percent. The yellow band in this chart [page 119] shows the national averages for teacher leaver rates. You want to try to beat the national rate. You want to have less teachers leaving the classroom, so green is better. If you have higher leaver rates, that would be the red.

Now we will look at Nevada's teacher leaver rate over the last two decades [page 120]. What we see is that Nevada's teacher leaver rate has consistently been higher than the national average for the last two decades. The only time Nevada even touched the national average was at the height of the Great Recession in 2009, when there was nowhere to go. When you look at this, you can see that Nevada's teacher leaver rates bounce around between 10 to 12 percent, and the national average is around 7 percent. That seems like it is not a big deal. However, if you want to reduce your teacher leaver rate from 12 percent down to 7 percent, that is a 42 percent reduction in the number of teachers leaving the classroom every year. If we had matched the national rate in 2011 through 2017, that would have resulted in thousands more teachers in the classroom today.

When we look at teacher attrition, is there anything that can help predict it? What we have here [page 125] is teacher leaver rates by teacher age over the last two decades. You will see in this first dot, the average leaver rate for teachers under age 25 is about 17 percent. As teachers get older and enter their mid-career, the leaver rate is reduced until they get to about age 45 to 49. At age 50, the leaver rate starts to increase again as teachers approach retirement. By age 55, the leaver rate exceeds the overall state rate. What we can see here is that at age 50, the leaver rate starts to accelerate, and by age 55, they exceed the state rate.

How many of our teachers are 50 years or older [page 126]? Currently, it is the highest it has ever been. Almost 1 in 3 Nevada classroom teachers are age 50 or older. Back in 1998, it was 1 in 4 teachers. How many of our teachers are younger [page 127]? The percentage of teachers who are under 30 years old is 14 percent. Back in 1998, it was 22 percent. What I want to draw your attention to here is that every time we have a recession, our teaching workforce gets older. What happens is, it is not that teachers are getting laid off, instead we do not fill vacancies. Every time there is a budget cut, we are not hiring young teachers and our teacher workforce is getting older.

To summarize [page 128], at age 50, leaver rates start to increase. By age 55, leaver rates exceed the overall state average. Age 50, right now in this school year, is the most popular age of our classroom teachers. Hiring young teachers contracts during a recession. Why is all of this so alarming? Because what we just previously saw is that the pipeline for new teachers is consistently shrinking over time [page 129]. At the very time our leaver rates are likely to accelerate over the next five years, the pipeline of new teachers is also shrinking.

To summarize [page 131], Nevada's teacher attrition rates have continuously lagged the national averages. Our African American teachers, teachers under age 25, and teachers over age 55 are the most likely to leave the classroom. Nevada's teacher workforce is older than it has ever been, and will likely lead to an acceleration of leaver rates over the next five years. At the same time these leaver rates are likely to accelerate, the national teacher pipeline that we so heavily rely on is shrinking.

The conclusion of all of these analyses is: Nevada's class sizes are too big [page 151]. Nine out of ten students are sitting in a class larger than the recommended class size. Nevada needs more teachers [page 152]. Just to improve the core classes, we need 3,000 teachers today. To improve the system-wide totals, we need almost 10,000 teachers. To lead the nation, we would need almost 24,000 teachers today. Not all of our students have equitable access to experienced teachers [page 153], and the lack of access to experienced teachers is associated with lower student outcomes [page 154]. We saw that Nevada's teacher pipeline significantly lags national averages, to the point that we are relying on over 60 percent of our teachers to be prepared outside of Nevada [page 155]. The national teacher pipeline is shrinking [page 156], which is what you see on that top line, while at the same time, Nevada's teacher pipeline, the lower line, is not expanding.

Something we did not have time to go into today, but it is detailed in the exhibit you have [page 158], is sometimes you will hear that positions external to the classroom are inflated. We investigated that issue as well, and we saw that in all of the positions where national data is available, Nevada is staffing these positions under national staffing ratios. Therefore, we have fewer school administrators, fewer counselors, fewer central administrators, and fewer library specialists than the national staffing ratios.

We saw that the teacher shortage problem is compounded by the fact that Nevada's teacher attrition rates have continuously exceeded national averages [page 160]. We saw that these leaver rates start to accelerate by age 50, and exceed the state rate by age 55 [page 161], at the very time we have the most teachers in that age range that we have ever had.

Another thing we did not have time to go into today, but again is in more detail in the exhibit you have [page 163], is teacher morale is alarmingly low. We provided all of the survey data the U.S. Department of Education provided so we can compare teacher morale across the country.

One thing I want to bring us back to, because we just saw a lot of alarming information, is a reminder to the question, Does Nevada have an education system worth investing in? We saw the last time we made a large strategic investment [page 165], the cohort that had the exposure to that investment was the first cohort ever to perform in-line with their national peers in reading [page 167]. Nevada does have an education system worth investing in.

I leave you with this quote from St. Augustine, "Hope has two beautiful daughters; their names are Anger and Courage. Anger at the way things are, and Courage to see that they do not remain as they are."

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

Thank you for that presentation. We do have a couple of questions. I really appreciate this information and that you ended with that quote. That is something we all need. It was very sobering.

Assemblywoman Nguyen:

You had mentioned some of the specific differences and inequities between our black and Latino students as compared to the Asian and Caucasian populations. I know the Asian community is growing in Nevada, and is probably the fastest growing. I also know that often that data is compiled for all Asian Americans and they are treated as a monolithic group. I do not believe you do this, but would you be open to disaggregating that data so we would be able to see the real results within the Asian community so we do not get that model minority and we are not losing out on true representation and the inequities within that group? Is that something you do, and is that something you look at in determining some of the inequities? I know that is an important aspect of what you are doing.

Nathan Trenholm:

The data we had to do this analysis does not allow us to disaggregate any further than where we did. That information is coming from the student information system, so the most disaggregated it is, is Asian. I would love to be able to break it down for you, we just do not have that granular of information, unfortunately.

Assemblywoman Nguyen:

That is what I thought. I know it is fairly new, like mid-90s new, to be able to look at that kind of information, and maybe we are a little behind. However, if it is something you are collecting, I would hope you would start to include that kind of disaggregated data because it is more representative.

I do have one other question. I think everyone can agree that smaller classrooms are needed. I am new to the Assembly Committee on Education this session, but it is something I care about in my community for parents, and I see it with my own kids in school, especially as they have gone through school. Their class sizes are getting bigger, and bigger, and bigger. It seems like there is some sort of disconnect between what we have enacted in legislation, because I am imagining we have the same conversation every two years during these presentations about how class sizes need to be smaller and what the problems are. I know there has been legislation that has been passed. It seems there is no accountability in our schools. I am wondering where that disconnect comes from? I have heard from teachers, and I have seen for myself, that it seems like some of these numbers, even with the ratios of teachers and students, they are dividing the number of all the licensed staff, such as librarians, coaches, learning strategists, special education teachers, so the ratio is not even accurate. You can have a ratio that looks like it is 1 teacher for every 20 students, but when you go into a classroom, it is actually 1 teacher and 40 students. I am wondering how that happens. Do we need to be more clear when we are doing our legislation so we can capture that information? Do you have an opinion about that?

Nathan Trenholm:

To that point, one of the things we did in this analysis that is different than what you alluded to is that, oftentimes, the data is all the number of students in a grade level and all the number of positions being paid. For this analysis, we went into actual core classes in the student information system to paint a more accurate picture of what is happening.

On top of that, instead of averaging class sizes, we averaged student experiences. The difference between those two things will paint the more accurate picture. For example, if there is a class size of 30 and a self-contained class of 4, the class average is 34 divided by 2, which is 17, so the average class size is 17. The way we did this analysis is we said this student experienced a class size of 4, this student experienced a class size of 4, this student had 4, and this student had 30, 30, 30, 30, and 30, which brings the average up to 29. Now we are averaging at the student level instead of the classroom level. What this analysis did, we hope, is change the scope in the way people approach this information. I alluded to it in the presentation that a lot of time people think about the teacher shortage as something like 200 teachers. What we really need to think about is what we want from our system. We ave

recommended classes sizes, so what would that take. It would take 10,000 teachers. It is a very different conversation. The same thing happens with this class-size discussion and compliance with federal law in reporting class sizes, they average the class size, which is why we often see numbers that do not jive with people's experiences. They may say the average class size is 17, while every student is saying they are sitting in a class of 30. We are trying to bring a more nuanced picture to it and say how many students were in a bigger class and what was the average student experience. We care about what students are experiencing, not averaging classes. That is how we tried to address both of those issues and help reframe these discussions.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

That is a very important distinction. We have another question.

Assemblywoman Miller:

I hate to say that it is music to my ears because it is really not a great song, and yet we keep singing it. I have been diligently chipping away at the class-size issue for the past two sessions. Specifically, what Assemblywoman Nguyen was just referring to, about how we actually come up with those numbers and why the reality of what is in the classroom is different for everyone. It is pretty much capturing all licensed employees and not the true experience of classes with 40, 50, and 60 kids.

I also want to applaud you because I appreciate the fact that it is also being said that we are not just a few hundred positions short. If we took into consideration what the recommended class sizes actually are, our numbers would be much higher. The other thing I look at when we are looking at class sizes and how I comfortably know we are in need of 10,000 teachers, is that we are not just including all the licensed employees, even if they do not have their own student roster. What about the full-time substitutes? In Nevada, we also have thousands of students who do not have a full-time licensed teacher. They have a full-time substitute that is filling that vacancy. Again, that makes our vacancies look much lower. There is a difference between a full-time substitute and a fully licensed teacher. There are also other alternative programs that fast track people. I have seen as little as two or three weeks of training. Some of your information mentioned the emergency licenses. Are we actually looking at what type of teachers are actually in the classroom versus how many adults are just filling vacancies?

Nathan Trenholm:

You are exactly right. All the things you just pointed out are so important. You can think about the teacher shortage as vacancies or you can think about how many teachers we need. You could also talk about class size. How many kids are sitting in this class and is it an experienced, high-quality teacher sitting there with them? That is why we made the charts that showed the access to experienced teachers to try and get to that point.

One of the limitations to this analysis is we could not connect the information that is in the state's teacher licensure system to what is in Infinite Campus. Infinite Campus has the class sizes, but the state licensure will tell me if the person is a long-term substitute or an

experienced teacher. What we had to do was use connect data through Infinite Campus across multiple years and then define an experienced teacher as having taught that class or that subject in school for at least three years. That is our attempt to try to differentiate what you are getting at, which is, yes, the class sizes may be 25, but it is actually even worse than that because those 25 are not all being served by a high-quality teacher. Right now, the best we could do by using Infinite Campus data is to say how many years that teacher had been teaching a specific course at that school. I cannot tell you right now, from the data available, how many of those classrooms were long-term substitutes or maybe first-year alternative route to licensure substitutes just because of the way it currently exists. Those two systems do not have information that we could connect.

We try to go into this analysis with all these nuances because, again, class sizes can be manipulated by putting inexperienced people in the classroom. Teacher vacancies can be manipulated by increasing class sizes. We try to approach this from multiple angles to show you that not everyone has access to an experienced teacher, and we need way more teachers than just the vacancies. We really tried to reframe with some nuance, but at the same time not going so far into the weeds that people cannot engage with the information.

Assemblywoman Miller:

I would like to take this off-line as to how to actually make these systems connect. Last session I actually passed a bill [[Assembly Bill 304 of the 80th Session](#)] that required the school boards to publicly publish how many students were actually in front of each teacher through the day so that information would be available, so it was not just the schools or the districts giving averages. I want to make sure that in period 1, this teacher has 47 students, in period 2 the teacher has 45 students. Sometimes it is close to 60 students. Again, I would really like to get to the core if you have some suggestions on how we can get to the point where we are actually seeing the real, raw numbers and not averages. The averages, even in this report, are very far off from the experiences of many of our students in many of our classrooms. I would love to take that off-line with you. Thank you for your report and your data.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

I believe we still have Superintendent Ebert available. Assemblywoman Hardy has a question for you. Mr. Trenholm, please stay put for a moment because we might be coming back to you.

Assemblywoman Hardy:

Thank you for this presentation, especially for the way you laid out the data in a very easy way to understand and grasp. I think it just shows all of the different areas in Nevada where we have some problems that need to be addressed in our schools.

It is interesting when you talked about how higher star schools have more experienced teachers and lower star schools have more inexperienced teachers, and the correlation in the student performance. I would like to ask Superintendent Ebert if we currently have programs to incentivize teachers to stay in their schools, especially in the underserved communities?

Jhone Ebert:

Yes, there are incentives, specifically for Title I schools, that are made available. Also, individual school districts have incentivized teachers as well.

Assemblywoman Hardy:

I think that is important because, ideally, we would like to have more teachers so we can have smaller class sizes, but if there is somehow a way to get those experienced teachers not to be movers but to stay where they are and work with some of these students, I think it could be beneficial.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

Are there any further questions from the Committee? [There were none]. I had heard about this presentation, and we actually got the CliffNotes version. Members, you have the entire slide presentation now [[Exhibit F](#)] so you can look at that. There is some really good information that has not been presented this way before.

Again, thank you for the presentations. Believe me, we will be in contact more during the session to talk about where we are headed and where we need to head.

Is there anyone here for public comment?

Christopher Daly, representing Nevada State Education Association:

The Nevada State Education Association (NSEA) has been the voice of educators for over 120 years. I have been able to watch the presentation on class size three times now, and a few of the slides really jump out. The slide on the progress made in fourth-grade reading scores on the NAEP examination is great news that Nevada's early literacy supports in special categorical programming has paid off.

Unfortunately, in the Governor's budget submission, we are facing \$33 million in proposed cuts to early literacy supports in the Read by Grade 3. Also keep in mind, any movement to the new funding plan really dissolves the state's strategic investments, including Read by Grade 3, Zoom, and Victory, and it is why NSEA has been calling for a delay and a rethinking of the implementation of Senate Bill 543 of the 80th Session.

Another slide that jumps out is the 87 percent of Nevada's students in a class that is larger than the recommendations by the State Board of Education. There are 375,000 Nevada students who are in overcrowded classrooms.

I know this is not a money committee, but in the money committees, we are fighting a proposed cut of over \$156 million to the class-size reduction programs in the next biennium. That is why NSEA is REDFORED [Red for Education] and why we will be in front of the Legislature Monday at noon. We hope to see you there.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

Thank you, Mr. Daly, for calling and for confirming this presentation. I understand you have seen it in its entirety, and it truly is fascinating. Is there any other public comment? [There was none]. Are there any comments from members before we adjourn? [There were none]. Our next Committee meeting will be Tuesday, February 16, 2021, at 1:30 p.m. That concludes our meeting for today.

This meeting is adjourned [at 3:04 p.m]..

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Sarah Baker
Committee Secretary

Lori McCleary
Transcribing Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Assemblywoman Shannon Bilbray-Axelrod, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBITS

[Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda.

[Exhibit B](#) is the Attendance Roster.

[Exhibit C](#) is a copy of a PowerPoint presentation titled "Statewide Plan for the Improvement of Pupils & Annual Report," dated February 2021, presented by Jhone Ebert, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education; Sarah Nick, Management Analyst, Department of Education; and Jessica Todtman, Chief Strategy Officer, Department of Education.

[Exhibit D](#) is a document titled "2020 Annual Report," dated January 31, 2021, submitted by Jhone Ebert, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education.

[Exhibit E](#) is a copy of a PowerPoint presentation titled "Battle Born Globally Prepared, Nevada Department of Education, 2020 Statewide Plan for the Improvement of Pupils," submitted by Jhone Ebert, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education.

[Exhibit F](#) is a copy of a PowerPoint presentation titled "Nevada Class Sizes, A Comprehensive Review," submitted by the Department of Education and presented by Nathan Trenholm, representing Data Insight Partners, LLC.