

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**

**Eighty-Third Session
May 22, 2025**

The Committee on Ways and Means was called to order by Chair Daniele Monroe-Moreno at 8:18 a.m. on Thursday, May 22, 2025, in Room 3137 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada and Room 2 of the Nevada Legislature Hearing Rooms, 7120 Amigo Street, Las Vegas, Nevada. Copies of the minutes, including the Agenda [[Exhibit A](#)], the Attendance Roster [[Exhibit B](#)], and other substantive exhibits, are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau and on the Nevada Legislature's website at www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/83rd2025. Link to [Executive Budget](#).

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Assemblymember Daniele Monroe-Moreno, Chair
Assemblymember Shea M. Backus, Vice Chair
Assemblymember Natha C. Anderson
Assemblymember Tracy Brown-May
Assemblymember Jill Dickman
Assemblymember Gregory T. Hafen II
Assemblymember Brian Hibbetts
Assemblymember Sandra Jauregui
Assemblymember Gregory S. Koenig
Assemblymember Erica Mosca
Assemblymember PK O'Neill
Assemblymember Selena Torres-Fossett
Assemblymember Howard Watts
Assemblymember Steve Yeager

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Assemblymember Elaine H. Marzola, Assembly District No. 21
Assemblymember Tanya P. Flanagan, Assembly District No. 7



STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Sarah Coffman, Assembly Fiscal Analyst
Brody Leiser, Assembly Chief Principal Deputy Fiscal Analyst
James Malone, Principal Program Analyst
John Kucera, Principal Program Analyst
Joi Guthrie, Committee Manager
Natalia Jordan, Committee Manager
Geigy Stringer, Committee Secretary
Lisa McAlister, Committee Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT:

Alexander Marks, Deputy Director of Field and Communications, Nevada State Education Association
Jennifer R. Pierce, Executive Director, Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensing Board
Taylor Avery, Manager, Political Affairs, Vegas Chamber
Shawna Ross, Advocacy, Nevada Speech-Language Hearing Association
Catherine Nielsen, Executive Director, Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, Department of Health and Human Services
Casey Melvin, Chief Executive Officer, Tilton's Therapy
Isabelle Hatch, Assistant Director, Government Affairs, Associated Students of the University of Nevada
Lisa Swearingen, Deputy Administrator, Administrative and Child Services, Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, Department of Health and Human Services
Kelly Brandon, Deputy District Attorney, Office of the District Attorney, Carson City, Nevada
Stacie Weeks, Administrator, Division of Health Care Financing and Policy, Department of Health and Human Services
Ann Jensen, Agency Manager, Division of Health Care Financing and Policy, Department of Health and Human Services
Adam Plain, Insurance Regulation Liaison, Division of Insurance, Department of Business and Industry
Leonardo Benavides, Director, State Government Affairs and Community Engagement, Office of Government Affairs and Community Engagement, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Nancy Carlson, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada
Ashley Garza Kennedy, Principal Management Analyst, Government Affairs, Department of Administrative Services, Clark County
Alejandro Rodriguez, Director, Government Relations, Nevada System of Higher Education
Molly Stubblefield, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada
Erika Loveland, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada

Caitlin Gwin, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada
Michael Flores, Vice President, Government and Community Engagement,
University of Nevada, Reno
Austin Lipson, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Sarah Kerby, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Harut Khachoyan, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Ciara (Keira) Clark, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Tiffany Greenameyer, Director, Office of Finance, Office of the Governor
Leticia Metherell, Program Manager, Division of Public and Behavioral Health,
Department of Health and Human Services
Victor Salcido, representing Community Health Alliance
Stephen Wood, Director of Strategy and Public Policy, Office of Economic
Development, Office of the Governor
Daniel Stewart, representing Clark County Education Association
Christy McGill, Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Family
Engagement, Department of Education
Marie Neisess, President, Clark County Education Association
Amber Stidham, representing Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance
Wesley Harper, Director, Government Affairs, City of North Las Vegas
Emily Osterberg, Director, Government Affairs, Henderson Chamber of Commerce
Mendy Elliott, representing Port of Nevada
Taylor Allison, Emergency Management and Government Affairs Director,
Lyon County
Joe Lombardo, Governor
Steve Canavero, Interim Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of
Education
Megan Peterson, Deputy Superintendent for Student Investment, Department of
Education
Colton Brown, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada
Juliette Leong, Private Citizen, Sparks, Nevada
Gil Lopez, Executive Director, Charter School Association of Nevada
Logan Hegi, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada
Theresa DeGraffenreid, Private Citizen, Gardnerville, Nevada
Anthony Curry, Director of Public Policy, Opportunity 180
Eric Cardona, Government Affairs Manager, Henderson Chamber of Commerce
Peter Guzman, President, Las Vegas Latin Chamber of Commerce
Hugh Anderson, Managing Director, Partner, High Tower Las Vegas; and Chair,
Government Affairs Committee, Vegas Chamber
Olivia Sandoval, Private Citizen, Henderson, Nevada
Olivia Neely, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Ana Wood, Director, Government Affairs Chair, Las Vegas Asian Chamber of
Commerce
Aliyah Escudero, Private Citizen
Hector Escudero, Private Citizen
Julia Manzano, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada

Sam Castor, Private Citizen
Joshua Skaggs, Legislative Affairs Director, Nevada Republican Party
Annette Dawson Owens, Private Citizen, Henderson, Nevada
Jesus Marquez, Director of Operations, American Christian Caucus
Abraham Canejo, Private Citizen, North Las Vegas, Nevada
Noemi Abrego, Private Citizen
Jesus Marquez, Private Citizen
Rachel Croft, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada
Robert Munson, representing Nevada State Education Association
Dylan Shaver, representing Washoe County School District
Mary Pierczynski, representing Nevada Association of School Superintendents
Terri Shuman, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Danielle Ford, Member, Nevada State Board of Education
Malcolm Greer, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Amanda Morgan, Legal Director, Educate Nevada Now
Vicki Kreidel, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Susan Kaiser, Private Citizen
Isaias Gallegos, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Mohamed Bilal, Private Citizen, Henderson, Nevada
David Gardner, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Ed Gonzalez, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Erica Neely, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Cyrus Hojjaty, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Katrin Ivanoff, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

[Roll was taken. Committee rules and protocol were reviewed.] Good morning and welcome to the Committee on Ways and Means. Today, we have several bills that have already had their policy hearings. This is the fiscal committee. We are here to talk about the fiscal aspects of bills. However, later this afternoon, we will have a bill that has not had a policy hearing. We will have its policy hearing and fiscal hearing; in that, we will be limiting testimony to one-half hour in support, one-half hour in opposition, and one-half hour in neutral, and the comments will be limited to two minutes per person.

We have a few of our budget bills, and we will start with those. Members, I will remind you that you heard each one of these budget bills in a bill draft request walk-through a few days ago. It seems like a long time ago, but it was a day or two ago, and we need to get those to the floor. We will start with those first. With that, we will open the hearing on Senate Bill 500, which ensures sufficient funding for K-12 public education for the biennium. We invite staff to the table.

Senate Bill 500: Ensures sufficient funding for K-12 public education for the 2025-2027 biennium. (BDR S-1232)

James Malone, Principal Program Analyst:

Senate Bill 500 is the 2025 K-12 Education Bill. It ensures sufficient funding for K-12 public education for the 2025-2027 biennium. The bill draft request was introduced May 19, 2025, in the evening where we walked the Committee through the provisions of the bill. Nothing has changed since that meeting. We are here and available to answer any questions you may have.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Members, we did have the walk-through of this bill when it was in bill draft request form, and at that point, you all had opportunities to ask questions. You have since had a chance to go through it. Do you have any questions for staff this morning? Not seeing any, we will move to testimony in support for Senate Bill 500. [There was none.] We will move to opposition. If there is anyone who would like to provide testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 500, I invite you to the tables in Carson City and Las Vegas.

Alexander Marks, Deputy Director of Field and Communications, Nevada State Education Association:

It is a serious concern for our schools and the students we teach and educate that we have to oppose this bill [[Exhibit C](#)]. Even before session, Nevada State Education Association (NSEA) members warned the Legislature that a mere \$2 increase in per-pupil funding will be devastating to Nevada schools. Everyone knows Nevada is chronically underfunded. It is so bad that even after last session's increases, we still trail the national average by \$4,000 per pupil.

Nevada educators have consistently implored lawmakers this session to pass the plan offered by the Commission on School Funding to ensure \$700 annual increases to reach the national average in a decade. At this point, it seems ironic that the Legislature, not NSEA, created the Commission and requested this plan. Meanwhile, the Governor has repeated that Nevada can no longer accept a lack of funding for poor school performance. However, he has failed to acknowledge that Nevada is still near the bottom in per-pupil funding—47th—with the largest class sizes in the nation. He dismissed the Commission's plan as being advisory and also dismissed the *Nevada Revised Statutes* which calls on him to increase base per-pupil funding by at least the combined rate of inflation. Instead of the \$530 from the Committee's closing documents, he went with \$2 which will not keep up with increasing costs, the Public Employees' Retirement System increase coming in July, or most classroom items in a classroom wish list.

In response to his budget proposal, Nevada school districts have been discussing deficits and deliberating cuts to schools. The good news is the Legislature does have the opportunity to stay on track with the Commission's plan. Even after using the Education Stabilization Account to offset the reduction in anticipated revenue, we still have about \$2 billion in reserves which is more than enough to cover the \$640 million called for by the Commission.

Senate Bill 500 will turn this 10-year plan into at least a 12- to 15-year plan if we are lucky. It is easy to do the right thing when times are good. The question of commitment to Nevada schools is best answered when things are more difficult. It is, once again, a rainy day in Nevada. We heard that from the Speaker last week. We heard that we have the money. The Legislature must be prepared to use the reserves to maintain momentum to keep Nevada on track. We urge the Legislature to pass an education budget that reflects real commitment to Nevada schools. This does not have to be the \$2 session.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Seeing no one else at the table in Carson City to provide testimony in opposition and no one at the table in Las Vegas, we will go to the phone line. Do we have anyone on the phone who would like to testify in opposition to Senate Bill 500? [There was no one.]

I invite anyone who would like to provide neutral testimony on Senate Bill 500 to the tables in Las Vegas or in Carson City. [There was no one.] We will go to the phone line for neutral testimony on Senate Bill 500. [There was no one.] I do not anticipate that the presenters of the bill have any closing comments, so we will close the hearing on Senate Bill 500, and we will open the hearing on Senate Bill 501.

Senate Bill 501: Authorizes expenditures by agencies of the State Government for the 2025-2027 biennium. (BDR S-1231)

John Kucera, Principal Program Analyst:

I am joined by Morgan Barlow and Tom Weber as Fiscal Division staff. Senate Bill 501 was presented as bill draft request (BDR) 1231 on Monday, May 19, 2025. No changes have been made, and Madam Chair, we stand open for any questions.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Members, you had the opportunity to walk through this bill with staff when it was in BDR draft form and had the opportunity to ask questions at that time. You have had a day or two to look through the BDR draft that is now our bill. Are there any questions? I am not seeing any questions from members.

We will open support testimony. If there is anyone who would like to testify in support of Senate Bill 501, I invite you to the tables in Carson City or in Las Vegas. [There was no one.] We will go to our phone line. [There was no one.]

We will move to opposition. If there is anyone who would like to testify in opposition to Senate Bill 501, I invite you to the tables in Carson City and in Las Vegas. [There was no one.] We will go to the phone line again to see if we have anyone who would like to testify in opposition to Senate Bill 501. [There was no one.]

We will move to neutral. If there is anyone who would like to provide neutral testimony on Senate Bill 501, I invite you to the tables. [There was no one.] We will go to the phone line for neutral testimony on Senate Bill 501. [There was no one.] We will ask the presenters whether they have any closing remarks. [Closing remarks were waived.] We will close the hearing on Senate Bill 501, and we will open the hearing on Senate Bill 502.

Senate Bill 502: Authorizes and provides funding for certain projects of capital improvement. (BDR S-1233)

Brody Leiser, Assembly Chief Principal Deputy Fiscal Analyst:

I will present Senate Bill 502, which was presented by staff on Monday evening in bill draft request (BDR) form. Senate Bill 502 provides for the implementation of the 2025 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) as approved by the money committees. The bill includes funding in the amount of \$1.097 billion for the 2025 Capital Improvement Program and \$113.8 million for resource conservation and preservation programs of the state outside of the CIP. Additionally, Senate Bill 502 includes \$191.9 million in general obligation bonds and \$33.9 million in General Funds to support legislative capital improvement projects. Madam Chair, I would be happy to answer any questions members have.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Members, once again, this is a bill that you had a walk-through with staff when it was in the BDR form just a day or so ago and had the opportunity to look through and read over the bill prior to today. Does anyone have any questions for Mr. Leiser?

Assemblymember Torres-Fossett:

Could you talk about your favorite maintenance project in this bill?

Brody Leiser:

It is difficult to choose one, Assemblymember Torres-Fossett. I could not possibly pick favorites. Just like I could not pick favorite legislators or favorite committees of this body—I love them all.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

What a politically correct answer. Are there any other questions for Mr. Leiser? I am not seeing any. We thank you for presenting, and we will invite to the table anyone who would like to testify in support of Senate Bill 502. Not seeing anyone approach the table in Carson City and no one at the table in Las Vegas, will go to the phone line. [There was no one.]

We will move to opposition. If there is anyone who would like to provide testimony in opposition to Senate Bill 502, I invite you to the tables in Carson City and Las Vegas. [There was no one.] We will go to the phone line. [There was no one.]

Then we will move to neutral. Do we have anyone who would like to provide neutral testimony on Senate Bill 502? I invite you to the table in Carson City and Las Vegas. [There was no one.] We will go to the phone line to see if we have anyone who would like to provide neutral testimony on Senate Bill 502. [There was no one.] Mr. Leiser has taken his seat back here on the dais; I do not believe he has any closing remarks, so we will close the hearing on Senate Bill 502, and we will take a quick recess.

[The Committee recessed at 8:35 a.m. and reconvened at 8:55 a.m.]

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Thank you for your patience. We will bring the Committee on Ways and Means back to order, and we will move to a work session. If you were in our Committee earlier this week, we received permission from the Speaker to work session bills as needed. So, we will be conducting work sessions for Senate Bill 500, Senate Bill 501, and Senate Bill 502. We will turn the microphone over to our Assembly Fiscal Analyst.

Senate Bill 500: Ensures sufficient funding for K-12 public education for the 2025-2027 biennium. (BDR S-1232)

Sarah Coffman, Assembly Fiscal Analyst:

Senate Bill 500 relates to education. It makes appropriations relating to the base per-pupil funding, weighted funding, and other educational purposes. Madam Chair, there are no amendments recommended for this piece of legislation.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Members, are there any questions? Not seeing any, I will accept a motion to do pass Senate Bill 500.

ASSEMBLYMEMBER BACKUS MOVED TO DO PASS SENATE BILL 500.

ASSEMBLYMEMBER JAUREGUI SECONDED THE MOTION.

Is there any discussion on the motion?

Assemblymember Hafen:

Chair, my sincere compliments to you, the Speaker, and to staff. A lot of work has gone into this budget. I am going to vote yes today, with reservations pending the Speaker's bill to include the charter school pay. I know the Speaker has been working very hard. He presented that bill, and I have faith that bill is going to get across the finish line.

I will be voting yes today on all three of the budgets in this work session, and I will make this disclosure once I see the language and the bill moving forward. I want to say thank you Chair, thank you to the Speaker, the Majority Leader, and all of staff. We are moving in the right direction.

Assemblymember Dickman:

I ditto for all three.

Assemblymember Hibbetts:

Ditto.

Assemblymember O'Neill:

Ditto.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

All right, seeing no other discussion. We will take a vote.

THE MOTION PASSED. (ASSEMBLYMEMBER YEAGER WAS
ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

We are moving on to our next bill for our work session, Senate Bill 501.

Senate Bill 501: Authorizes expenditures by agencies of the State Government for the 2025-2027 biennium. (BDR S-1231)

Sarah Coffman, Assembly Fiscal Analyst:

Today, the Committee heard Senate Bill 501 which authorizes expenditures by various officers, departments, boards, agencies, commissions and institutions of the state government for the 2025-2027 biennium. Madam Chair, there are no recommended amendments for this piece of legislation.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Members, are there any questions?

Assemblymember Backus:

Madam Chair, this is more of a statement than a question. Because Senate Bill 501 involves the Windsor Park Environmental Justice Act, I would like to advise the Committee that as an attorney, one of my clients is Community Development Program Center of Nevada, which is the developer who was awarded the project under this Act. Since the independence of judgment of a reasonable person in my position with respect to this item could be materially affected by legal employment, I am making this disclosure pursuant to Assembly Standing Rule 23 and will abstain from voting to approve Senate Bill 501.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Thank you for the statement of disclosure for abstention. Are there any other questions or discussions? Not seeing any, I will accept a motion to do pass.

ASSEMBLYMEMBER JAUREGUI MOVED TO DO PASS SENATE BILL 501.

ASSEMBLYMEMBER WATTS SECONDED THE MOTION.

Is there any further discussion on the motion? [There was none.]

THE MOTION PASSED. (ASSEMBLYMEMBER BACKUS ABSTAINED FROM THE VOTE. ASSEMBLYMEMBER YEAGER WAS ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

Next, we will open the work session for Senate Bill 502.

Senate Bill 502: Authorizes and provides funding for certain projects of capital improvement. (BDR S-1233)

Sarah Coffman, Assembly Fiscal Analyst:

Senate Bill 502 was heard today in Ways and Means. It relates to projects of capital improvement and authorizes certain expenditures for certain projects for the Executive and Legislative Branches of the State Government. It also levies a property tax to support the Consolidated Bond Interest and Redemption Fund. Madam Chair, there are no recommended amendments for this bill.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Are there any questions on Senate Bill 502? I am not seeing any. I will accept a motion to do pass.

ASSEMBLYMEMBER BACKUS MOVED TO DO PASS SENATE BILL 502.

ASSEMBLYMEMBER JAUREGUI SECONDED THE MOTION.

Is there any discussion on the motion? [There was none.]

THE MOTION PASSED. (ASSEMBLYMEMBER YEAGER WAS ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

I will assign all three floor statements for Senate Bill 500, Senate Bill 501, and Senate Bill 502 to myself. That will close the work sessions, and we will go back to our agenda. We will open the hearing for Assembly Bill 230, which is a measure that enacts the Audiology

and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact and invite Assemblymember Marzola to the table.

Assembly Bill 230: Enacts the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact. (BDR 54-568)

Assemblymember Elaine H. Marzola, Assembly District No. 21:

Good morning, Chair Monroe-Moreno and members of the Committee. I am the sponsor of Assembly Bill 230, which enacts the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact. The Nevada Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensing Board submitted a fiscal note stating that much was unknown regarding the potential impact on the Board's revenue and expenses as the Compact becomes operational.

Since the fiscal note was submitted, Jennifer Pierce, Executive Director of the Board provided a written update on May 20, 2025, which is available on the Nevada Electronic Legislative Information System, that based on the recent information received, there is no plan to assess a state participation fee, and the implementation of the Compact will not occur until late fiscal year 2026 or beyond. Therefore, the Board believes the current resources are sufficient to cover costs associated with A.B. 230, which would eliminate the fiscal note. Chair, I do have Jennifer Pierce with me if you would like her to add any additional information.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Yes, any additional information would be great.

Jennifer R. Pierce, Executive Director, Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensing Board:

I do not know that I have anything in addition to the letter that I submitted on May 20, 2025, and I could answer any other questions to that.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

We do have a few questions.

Assemblymember Backus:

It is great to hear that this biennium there would not be a state participation fee, but looking at future biennia, do we have any knowledge what that participation fee would be for the State of Nevada?

Jennifer R. Pierce:

The Compact staff advised me they would not anticipate a state participation fee in the foreseeable future and that, if one were needed to be assessed, they would likely be looking at a sliding fee scale based on the number of participants, like the Psychology Compact does, but it probably would not exceed \$6,000 annually, which is what the Nursing Compact charges. They did also indicate that there may be potential grant funding because they are currently supported by professional organizations.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Members, are there any other questions? Not seeing any, we will call to the table anyone who would like to testify in support of Assembly Bill 230.

Taylor Avery, Manager, Political Affairs, Vegas Chamber:

The Vegas Chamber is in support of the fiscal policy of this bill.

Shawna Ross, Advocacy, Nevada Speech-Language Hearing Association:

We are in support of this bill and thank you for your consideration. I also want to mention that May is National Speech-Language Hearing Month. We have been active in the community in trying to spread the word about our profession. I just wanted to put that in there.

Jennifer R. Pierce:

I did not say it during the presentation, but on the record, the Board is absolutely in support of the bill.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Not seeing anyone else approach the table in Carson City and not seeing anyone at the table in Las Vegas, we will go to our phone line to see if there is anyone who would like to provide testimony in support of Assembly Bill 230.

Catherine Nielsen, Executive Director, Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities, Department of Health and Human Services:

Due to this being a money committee and our wanting to be brief and short, we will echo and ditto all of the comments prior to us and thank you for your time in hearing this bill today.

Casey Melvin, Chief Executive Officer, Tilton's Therapy:

We are a multidisciplinary practice. We echo all previous comments in support of this bill. Thank you for considering it.

Isabelle Hatch, Assistant Director, Government Affairs, Associated Students of the University of Nevada:

The Associated Students of the University of Nevada has been representing the undergraduate student body since 1898. I am here today to express our strong support for A.B. 230, which adopts the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact.

To provide some background information: Undergraduate students in the Speech Pathology and Audiology program at the University of Nevada, Reno must complete at least a master's degree, a clinical fellowship, and state licensure before entering the profession. However, they still must complete state-specific license processes creating many financial barriers. Assembly Bill 230 provides a critical solution by allowing Nevada to join the Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact. It reduces administrative burdens for recent graduates and makes it easier for Nevada-trained professionals to return to practice in the state after gaining experience elsewhere. By reducing barriers to licensure and expanding

postgraduate career opportunities, A.B. 230 will strengthen Nevada's ability to retain Nevada pathology and audiology students postgraduation. We urge the Committee to pass this legislation to support the future professional success of undergraduates on this career path.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Having no additional calls to provide support, we will move to opposition. If there is anyone who would like to provide testimony in opposition to Assembly Bill 230, I invite you to the tables. I am not seeing anyone approach the table in Carson City or in Las Vegas. Is there anyone who would like to provide testimony in opposition. [There was no one.]

We will move to neutral. If there is anyone who would like to provide neutral testimony on Assembly Bill 230, I invite you to the tables in Carson City and Las Vegas. I am not seeing anyone approach either table. We will go to the phone line. [There was no one.]

We ask the presenter, and she is indicating she has no closing remarks. We will close the hearing on Assembly Bill 230 and open the hearing on Assembly Bill 344 (1st Reprint), which revises provisions relating to the judiciary. Welcome back, Assemblymember Marzola.

**Assembly Bill 344 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions relating to the judiciary.
(BDR 38-155)**

Assemblymember Elaine H. Marzola, Assembly District No. 21:

It is my pleasure to introduce Assembly Bill 344 (1st Reprint), which aims to modernize and improve various aspects of our judicial process with a particular focus on child welfare proceedings and the appointment of attorneys in certain cases. Today, I am joined by Kelly Brandon, supervising Deputy District Attorney, and Lisa Swearingen, Deputy Administrator with the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS), Department of Health and Human Services. The Division of Welfare and Supportive Services submitted a fiscal note of \$433,060 for Assembly Bill 344 (1st Reprint) to update the IT [information technology] systems and forms reflecting the change from "master" to "judicial officer." However, DWSS will use federal incentive funds to cover the entire cost resulting in no fiscal impact to the state. The agency also confirmed that the bill's effective date, providing a year from July 1, 2025, to July 1, 2026, gives sufficient time to complete these updates. I do have my copresenters, if you would like any additional information.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

The \$433,000-plus fiscal note has no impact on the State General Fund? Could you expand upon that a little more?

Lisa Swearingen, Deputy Administrator, Administrative and Child Services, Division of Welfare and Supportive Services, Department of Health and Human Services:

This is a child support bill, and we can use child support incentive dollars to pay for that, so there will be no impact to the General Fund for that.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Thank you for that update. Members, are there any other questions?

Assemblymember Backus:

Has anyone reached out to Douglas County regarding their fiscal note, or whether that remains? It is a small fiscal note of \$17,500.

Kelly Brandon, Deputy District Attorney, Office of the District Attorney, Carson City, Nevada:

I am a supervising deputy district attorney in Carson City. I am here today in my capacity as subcommittee Chair for the Court Improvement Program for Child Welfare. We did not hear anything additionally from Douglas County. However, the statewide subcommittee does address this throughout the year. They are a member of that subcommittee. During that session, their judicial body had indicated to us that there was not going to be a fiscal impact on them. The fiscal note is contrary to the other information we have from them. The bill otherwise is consistent with what their current practice is, and that was why we had put forward the bill in terms of appointment of attorneys. Those decisions were based off of what was going on in counties already and trying to make our law match up to the practice that was already taking place.

Assemblymember Backus:

I notice the other counties did not submit something, so I appreciate that.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Members, are there any other questions? Not seeing any, we will ask you to step back and invite to the table anyone who is here to testify in support of Assembly Bill 344 (1st Reprint). [There was no one.] We will go to the phone line. [There was no one.]

If there is anyone who would like to testify in opposition to Assembly Bill 344 (1st Reprint), I invite you to the tables in Carson City and Las Vegas. [There was no one.] We will go to the phone line. [There was no one.]

If anyone would like to provide neutral testimony on Assembly Bill 344 (1st Reprint), I invite you to the tables in Carson City or in Las Vegas. [There was no one.] We will go to the phone line. [There was no one.]

We will ask the bill sponsor, and she indicates she has no closing remarks. We will close the hearing on Assembly Bill 344 (1st Reprint) and move on to the next bill on our agenda. We will open the hearing for Assembly Bill 428 (1st Reprint), which requires certain health plans to include coverage for fertility preservation services. We welcome to the table for the first time before Ways and Means, Assemblymember Flanagan.

Assembly Bill 428 (1st Reprint): Requires certain health plans to include coverage for fertility preservation services. (BDR 57-915)

Assemblymember Tanya P. Flanagan, Assembly District No. 7:

Good morning, Chair Monroe-Moreno and members of the Committee. Thank you for allowing me to present Assembly Bill 428 (1st Reprint), which requires certain health plans to include coverage for fertility preservation services.

Cancer patients often face limited or no insurance coverage for fertility preservation. The National Institutes of Health reports that the average cost for women is \$10,000 to \$15,000 for embryo preservation, and there are additional costs for annual storage fees. This bill requires public and private health plans, including Medicaid and insurance for state and local government employees, to provide coverage for certain procedures or services that are deemed medically necessary to preserve fertility for an insured who has been diagnosed with breast cancer or ovarian cancer if the cancer may directly or indirectly cause infertility; or the insured is expected to receive medical treatment for cancer and the treatment could directly or indirectly cause infertility.

Under this bill an insurer that is affiliated with a religious organization is not required to provide coverage if the insurer objects to providing the coverage on religious grounds and provides a written notice to insureds or prospective insureds disclosing that the insurer does not provide such coverage. The bill authorizes the Commissioner of Insurance, Department of Business and Industry, to require a policy of individual health insurance issued by a domestic insurer to a person residing in another state to contain the coverage.

Amendment 439 revised section 3, subsection 3, to allow that an insurer shall ensure that the benefits required by subsection 1 are made available to an insured through a provider of health care who participates in the network plan of the insurer or a provider of a health care that does not participate in the network plan of the insurer and who shall be paid in accordance with the health plan provisions with respect to in- and out-of-network participation.

Finally, the bill authorizes the Commissioner to suspend or revoke a certificate of a health maintenance organization that fails to provide such coverage. The Commissioner may also take such action against other health insurers that fail to provide such coverage.

I would offer that the Alliance for Fertility Preservation reports that 18 states and the District of Columbia have passed legislation that compels insurers to cover a portion or up to full coverage for fertility preservation procedures for cancer patients and others who are facing potential infertility as a result of medical treatment. Additionally, 18 other states are currently considering similar legislation. In the United States there are roughly 268,000 women who are diagnosed with invasive breast cancer annually. Twelve percent of these cases will be diagnosed in women under the age of 45 which translates to about 32,000 cases, nationally,

per year. About 1 percent of the U.S. population lives in Nevada. Meaning that we are looking at roughly 320 Nevada women. Thank you for the opportunity to present. If there are any questions, I will do my best.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Did you state whether you have amended the implementation date for this policy to go into effect?

Assemblymember Flanagan:

I did not mention that. I have not amended it. I am happy to do so if necessary.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I thought there was a conceptual amendment adjusting the implementation date to January 1, 2027.

Assemblymember Flanagan:

That amendment was not presented to me, but I am fine with that date. I have no objections to amending the implementation date. I am happy to have it included in the legislation.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

There were several fiscal notes from: the Public Employees' Benefits Program (PEBP); the Division of Insurance, Department of Business and Industry; the Division of Health Care Financing and Policy, Department of Health and Human Services; and the Elko County School District; Carson City; and Clark County. If we have PEBP or Business and Industry or Health Care Financing and Policy in the room, could you come the table to speak to your fiscal notes?

**Stacie Weeks, Administrator, Division of Health Care Financing and Policy,
Department of Health and Human Services:**

The extension by 12 months would reduce the fiscal note to \$228,034 for the State General Fund. My colleague, Ann Jensen, can speak to the total computable if you would like the federal share as well. It does make sense for us to delay it by 12 months because we will need to seek a waiver because this does not offer the benefit to the entire population. When we do that, we have to seek a federal waiver.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

If you could speak to the total?

**Ann Jensen, Agency Manager, Division of Health Care Financing and Policy,
Department of Health and Human Services:**

The total computable costs, which include both the State General Fund share as well as the federal authorized funds, are \$384,400 for fiscal year (FY) 2026 and \$263,371 for FY 2027.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Perfect. I appreciate you both coming up and explaining that.

Adam Plain, Insurance Regulation Liaison, Division of Insurance, Department of Business and Industry:

The Division did attach a fiscal note to Assembly Bill 428 (1st Reprint) of \$87,500 the first fiscal year, because it is half of a plan year, and \$175,000 per fiscal year, or \$350,000, per each biennium. It is important to note that this is not a fiscal note reflective of expenses borne by the agency. This is a fiscal note that we have attached under our federal obligations pursuant to 45 Code of Federal Regulations §155.107, subsection A3 [*sic*] to identify state-mandated benefits in the individual market which may exceed the state's current essential health benefits plan—the topic I have been talking about all session known as federal defrayal. I would be happy to answer any questions from the Committee about the Division's fiscal note.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Members, do you have any questions? [There were none.] With the delay in start date to January 2027, would that fiscal note for FY 2026 go away and start in 2027 and in future biennia?

Adam Plain:

That is correct, because the fiscal year starts on July 1, and individual market health plans start on January 1, there is always a six-month implementation for that first of the plan year overlapping the fiscal year. So, if the implementation date gets pushed back by one year, the FY 2026 note would drop to zero; the FY 2027 fiscal note would be cut in half to the \$87,500; and the effect on future biennia would remain the same.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Members, are there any other questions? [There were none.] I do not know whether we have any representatives from Elko County School District or Carson City or Clark County who could comment. Although the fiscal notes do not affect the state, I just want to know whether you want to make any statements about the fiscal notes that were included. All right, not seeing any representatives come to the table and not seeing any other questions from members, we will open up testimony in support of Assembly Bill 428 (1st Reprint).

Leonardo Benavides, Director, State Government Affairs and Community Engagement, Office of Government Affairs and Community Engagement, University of Nevada, Las Vegas:

We are here today in support of Assembly Bill 428 (1st Reprint). We want to thank Assemblymember Flanagan for bringing this very important subject forward.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I am not seeing anyone else approach the table in Carson City and no one at the table in Las Vegas. We will go to our phone. Do we have anyone who would like to testify in support of Assembly Bill 428 (1st Reprint)? [There was no one.]

We will move to opposition. Do we have anyone who would like to provide testimony in opposition to Assembly Bill 428 (1st Reprint)?

Nancy Carlson, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada:

This bill attempts to preserve fertility for individuals diagnosed with breast or ovarian cancer and whose fertility is impacted by cancer or its treatment. California has recently implemented a similar bill, Senate Bill 600 [2019], and opposing views on this bill state that insurance plans and the state could incur significant litigation risk including, but not limited to, class action lawsuits, inconsistent rulings, and punitive damages.

I am in support of this bill, but I want to state my concerns. It does not include all cancers that affect fertility; cervical, testicular, uterine, lymphoma, thyroid, leukemia, and colorectal cancers can also affect the reproductive organs. Other cancers which do not directly affect reproductive organs can impact fertility through chemotherapy or radiation therapy. Have you considered these other cancers or are you considering the litigation risk for those with cancers not covered by the bill?

My second question is this bill does not consider patient age. Women under 30 have a higher chance of successful fertility preservation after cancer treatment than those older than 30. Should there be an age range for females to improve the potential for positive outcomes? The failure of the bill, in my opinion is, as written, it does not consider other cancers that affect fertility and does not consider age which affects fertility treatment outcomes. Please oppose this bill as written. If you do plan to approve it, please consider the legal ramifications of the way the bill is written currently and amend it accordingly.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I am not seeing anyone else in Carson City nor in Las Vegas to testify in opposition. Is there anyone else who would like to testify in opposition to Assembly Bill 428 (1st Reprint)? [There was no one.] Is there anyone who would like to provide neutral testimony on Assembly Bill 428 (1st Reprint)? I invite you to the tables.

Ashley Garza Kennedy, Principal Management Analyst, Government Affairs, Department of Administrative Services, Clark County:

There was a question about the local government fiscal notes. We are neutral on the policy. We did testify to that in the policy committee. Just for the Committee's awareness, Clark County has a self-funded health plan. We have about 34,000 people on our health plan—that includes current employees, retirees, and their dependents.

We did an actuarial analysis on the fiscal impact of the bill. With our actuarial analysis we anticipate about 50 people a year who would be impacted at a cost of about \$1.5 million a year. The delayed implementation would obviously move our fiscal note to later years. It gives us a little bit of time to budget. I wanted to get that on the record, based off your questions.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Not seeing anyone else come to the table in Carson City or Las Vegas for neutral, we will go to our phone line for anyone who would like to provide neutral testimony on A.B. 428 (R1). [There was no one.]

I am going to invite the sponsor of the bill back to the table. I do not know if you have any closing remarks, but I have a closing remark for you. I just want to thank you for bringing this bill. I know there are many forms of cancer that we have been battling. I, as a child, started my life in foster care and was adopted by my parents. My mother had both breast cancer and ovarian cancer and could not have children. My father battled cancer as well—a veteran serving in the military. I know there is not a perfect bill. I know this is your freshman session. This is your first time before Ways and Means. I want to tell you, thank you for this bill. It will help so many families and lives. I know you have a personal story; I am not going to ask you to tell that story, but I just want to tell you thank you.

Assemblymember Flanagan:

Thank you, Madam Chair, for the opportunity to present this bill. It is very personal to me as a three-time breast cancer survivor. There are many families who deal with this. Due to the age when women initially begin to have breast cancer checks, at age 40, I think the bill has the components that will regulate the expansion and overuse and will narrow it and be sensitive to the needs of the state as well as of our Nevada families. So, thank you for the time to present this bill.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

With that, we will close the hearing on Assembly Bill 428 (1st Reprint). I stated at the top of the agenda that we will be taking some of the bills out of order. We will move next to Assembly Bill 476, which is a measure that makes an appropriation to the Thomas & Mack Legal Clinic at the William S. Boyd School of Law at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Assembly Bill 476: Makes an appropriation to the Thomas & Mack Legal Clinic at the William S. Boyd School of Law of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.
(BDR S-1140)

Assemblymember Howard Watts, Assembly District No. 15:

Good morning, Chair and members of the Committee. It is my pleasure to present Assembly Bill 476 for your consideration today. I am a proud graduate of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), and I am honored to represent the main campus for the University in District 15. This bill would make a \$500,000 appropriation in each fiscal year of the upcoming biennium to support the legal clinics at the William S. Boyd School of Law at UNLV. This would maintain state support at levels that were approved by this body last session.

The legal clinics at the law school provide free legal services to our community while offering students critical real world legal experience. One of the key missions of Boyd is to help meet the need for legal services among residents through clinical programs, externships, and pro bono services which involve students in hands-on community service. There are currently six clinics and practicums in the law school that support populations including survivors of domestic and sexual violence, small business development, immigration, mediation, criminal defense, and tenants' rights. These funds are essential to allow existing

pro bono services to continue and to allow some of the law school's newer clinics to develop. The law school also hopes to use funds to support fellows and staff attorneys who are the lifeblood that keep these clinics operational.

I do want to note there is a proposed amendment on this bill [[Exhibit D](#)]. This is at the request of UNLV to preserve some flexibility for the university; UNLV is considering whether to shift some of the programs that are currently specifically housed within the law school into other areas within the university. Even if this happens, the programs will retain a close working relationship with the law school. And because the university seeks and can obtain other grants and funding sources, which sometimes are available only for one year, UNLV would like to maintain some flexibility about how to allocate funds between the two years of the biennium. That concludes my presentation. I believe we do have representatives from UNLV available if there are any questions that the members of the Committee have.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

When you say a possible amendment, would that be an amendment to not revert those State General Funds so that they would be able to use them from fiscal year to fiscal year? What would that amendment look like?

Assemblymember Watts:

They are mainly looking for the ability to transfer funding, if it is unused in the first fiscal year, to the second fiscal year. So, it would not be a complete protection from reversion, but it would just give them the flexibility, if not all of the funds are used in the first fiscal year to be able to transfer those over to the second fiscal year.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Perfect. Thank you for that clarification. Then how soon would you have that amended language to this?

Assemblymember Watts:

I do have that.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Perfect. I will get that. All right, members, are there any other questions?

Assemblymember Torres-Fossett:

Could you talk a bit about the benefits of having this experiential legal education for law students? My understanding is those students are more competitive later on, when they are applying for other opportunities. I want to see if you or Boyd could describe those benefits.

Assemblymember Watts:

While I am a proud UNLV alum, I confess, I am not a Boyd alum. From my conversations and working on this in the past, I can say, absolutely, those services help develop the resumes of our law students and help identify their interests, get hands-on experience, build relationships, and then, help them succeed once they finish their legal education and enter

into their careers. So, it really is a win-win-win for the university and its reputation, for the students who are participating in the programs, and for the community that is getting access to services that might not otherwise exist.

Leonardo Benavides, Director, State Government Affairs and Community Engagement, Office of Government Affairs and Community Engagement, University of Nevada, Las Vegas:

I am a proud Boyd graduate and went through the clinic as well. Ditto. I echo the sentiments the Assemblymember made, but in addition, I do want to note that the Bar Exam is changing starting in 2027. One of the new components of that will be supervised practice. So, expanding our clinic services will be very key for that because we currently only have so many slots, and a lot of students are trying to get into them. The clinics are very popular. I think this funding will be very helpful with that.

Assemblymember Torres-Fossett:

My understanding is this appropriation would allow us to maintain funding that has previously been provided, and without this funding we would actually be losing spots that are currently being provided those students for that experiential learning. Is that correct?

Leonardo Benavides:

Yes, that is completely correct. This is maintaining what we have done the last couple of sessions.

Assemblymember Hibbetts:

My question is about the proposed amendment with the allocation changing from, specifically, the Thomas and Mack Legal Clinic at the William S. Boyd School of Law, to UNLV. Can you explain the reasoning for that and what effect that has?

Leonardo Benavides:

Yes. As Assemblymember Watts mentioned, that provides flexibility. There are still ongoing conversations—in particular, whether some of the clinics need to be moved into some of the other departments while still maintaining a relationship with the law school. There are still ongoing conversations as to what that would look like, but obviously, the allocation would go directly to the clinics themselves.

Assemblymember Watts:

I do want to note that is why the law school is being struck, but you will note, in the amendment, it still is specific. These funds would be specifically earmarked for pro bono legal services, experiential legal education, and student success. It is still going to the same mission. It is just making sure that if one of these clinics or community service programs is not housed directly in the law school, it would still be able to access funding under this appropriation.

Assemblymember Hibbetts:

For the record, the university could not opt to divert this funding to something else entirely, just because we struck the law school from the bill?

Assemblymember Watts:

You are correct.

Assemblymember Backus:

My colleague's questions struck an exemplar in my head. The Boyd Law School does, not necessarily a clinic, but a training program for children who are going to testify in court. That may be in conjunction with the Psychology Department or some other department. Is that the overlap that may occur with some of these clinics?

Leonardo Benavides:

Yes. For example, we have the Tenants' Rights Legal Residency. That is a joint venture with the Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada. Those are the types of programs we are talking about in terms of holding in conjunction—but these would be specifically for the clinics that the law school has. I believe Children's Corps is the one you are talking about.

Assemblymember Backus:

I was thinking in conjunction with the schools within the university. I just want to make sure this funding is going directly to the law school. The law school is not anticipating giving any grants or anything to community partners out of these funds, are they?

Leonardo Benavides:

Yes, that is correct.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Members, are there any other questions? Not seeing any, I will ask you to step back, and I will invite to the table anyone who would like to testify in support of Assembly Bill 476.

Alejandro Rodriguez, Director, Government Relations, Nevada System of Higher Education:

The Nevada System of Higher Education is in strong support of A.B. 476. We would like to thank Assemblymember Watts for bringing this forward. This is one of our Board-approved priorities. We thank you and urge your support.

Molly Stubblefield, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada:

I am a 2024 graduate of the William S. Boyd School of Law at UNLV. I am here to provide public comment in support of A.B. 476.

I served as a student attorney in the Tenants' Rights Legal Residency where we represented renters in the community facing eviction. Typically, renters facing eviction are not represented by an attorney. Yet we saw firsthand the positive impact that representation had on the outcome of these cases. The clinic program provides invaluable experiential education

to students while, at the same time, providing necessary free legal services to community members. Serving as a student attorney was the highlight of my law school career. I know it has already made me a better, more compassionate attorney and will continue to shape the rest of my legal career.

Appropriating funds for the Thomas and Mack Legal Clinic will allow the law school to continue to provide these important services and also expand on them in a stable manner.

Erika Loveland, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I finished my 1L year at the William S. Boyd School of Law and will be the first class to take that new Bar Exam that was referred to earlier. Not only is this a wise investment in Nevada's legal future for students like me who want to provide the very best possible services to our community, but also, it is a wise investment in our community in general, to be able to provide these pro bono services. I am excited to be here to join those clinics and to be able to offer that in a qualified way. Thanks to the professors and the staff at these wonderful clinics. I urge you to support the bill.

Caitlin Gwin, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada:

I am a graduate of the Boyd School of Law class of 2024, and I was a student attorney with the Survivors Representation and Advocacy Clinic. We did domestic violence work. We assisted clients with temporary protection orders, extension hearings on those orders, records sealing, and a variety of other services.

I will be brief, but there are three amazing things about this clinic. First of all, it provides an invaluable part of legal education. I am embarrassed to say, for the first two and one-half years of my law school career I had not been in a courtroom. After being part of the clinic, within weeks, I was in court in front of a hearing master representing clients. You cannot get that in a classroom. It makes you a better attorney. I will remind the Committee that Boyd is the only law school in the state, so stronger attorneys make a stronger Nevada.

Most importantly, it is the essential services that the clinics provide to the community. This is tangible, real lawyering. The Committee knows we are working with real clients in need. We are doing intake counseling, advice, and motion work. We are representing folks at hearings. I am confident that our clients would not have had the same legal outcome that they did with the clinic and, personally, it has inspired me to do pro bono work in this area after finishing my clerkship here.

Lastly, I cannot speak on any authority to this, but others have mentioned the upcoming requirements of the Bar Exam. This will streamline in that transition. So, I support.

Michael Flores, Vice President, Government and Community Engagement, University of Nevada, Reno:

We are here in strong support. We do recognize UNLV has the only law school in the state, and we are grateful they are such great partners. I see Michael Kagan there in the back of the

room in Las Vegas and cannot thank him enough for all of his advocacy and work in our community throughout the state. We work really closely with him and his team with everything going on right now. I am happy to be here in full support.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Not seeing anyone else approach the table in Carson City to offer support testimony and not seeing anyone at the table in Las Vegas, we will go to our phone line to see if we have anyone who would like to provide testimony in support of Assembly Bill 476.

Austin Lipson, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am graduating from Boyd this year, and I have worked in the legal clinic. In my opinion, the legal clinic offers the most powerful training experience at the law school. It not only provides students an opportunity to work on extremely high-stakes cases, but it often allows students to see those cases through from beginning to end, which is a rare and extremely informative process for a law student. Clinic cases give students a chance to practice a litany of lawyering skills such as research, evidence, preparation, witness interviewing, interfacing with government agencies, litigation, and so on. So important are the skills that a student sharpens in the Thomas and Mack Legal Clinic that I know many students who have worked in the clinic—even though they ultimately do not plan on practicing in the area of law that they focus on there—they just know that working there will make them better lawyers.

Aside from serving as a powerful training tool, the Thomas and Mack Legal Clinic also provides students at the law school with a service opportunity that is unmatched by any other program. To illustrate this point, I will share what I told the law school's first-year students about the program last month. The clinic allowed my practice partner and I to use the law to save someone's life, and the work I did in the clinic is the thing I am most proud of that I have ever done. In sum, the Thomas and Mack Legal Clinic is invaluable for turning law students into skilled lawyers, and it provides lifesaving services to the clients it helps. Please vote in favor of Assembly Bill 476 to fund the clinic.

Sarah Kerby, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am a 2L at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and I participated in the clinic. I did not write anything, and it sounds like a lot of people have really covered why the clinic is so amazing at UNLV. But I can share my experience as an Osvaldo Fumo Fellow last summer. I had a client for whom I wrote an appeal to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, and I actually got a call for oral arguments. One of my classmates and I prepared under the mentorship of Michael Kagan and Alissa Cooley in order to present oral arguments. So, as far as the resume-building aspect of this bill, and as far as student success—there are attorneys who will go their entire careers, I have been told, with going to the Ninth Circuit being the highlight. That experience in my second year of law school was just incredible, and it prepared me in ways that I still do not understand: public speaking, understanding different arguments, how to express your ideas succinctly but also intelligently—obviously, I am still working on that one.

I would encourage you all to vote yes. The clinic is a really cool opportunity. I am really grateful for its existence, and it is the reason why I came to UNLV. I am originally from Delaware. I came out here because of the clinic being available.

Harut Khachoyan, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I graduated from the William S. Boyd School of Law last week, and I had the opportunity to work with the legal clinic. The clinic not only represents an educational cornerstone for law students but also serves as a vital access-to-justice tool for our most vulnerable community members.

My role in the clinic involved advocating for a client facing a legal issue with life-changing consequences. Working alongside a fellow student and under the supervision of a licensed attorney, I was entrusted with my client's story, their fears, and ultimately their future. I conducted client interviews, drafted legal documents, and had the privilege of appearing in court. The experience was both humbling and transformative. It sharpened my legal skills in ways no classroom ever could, while instilling a profound sense of responsibility and purpose.

The clinic provides a unique opportunity to law school students because it functions at the intersection of education and public service. Students receive hands-on training in real-world lawyering, while clients, many of whom cannot afford legal representation, gain access to dedicated advocates who are deeply committed to their cases. The clinic fills a critical gap in Nevada's justice system, especially for those who might otherwise fall through the cracks. Assembly Bill 476 is not just an investment in legal education—it is an investment in the legal empowerment of our community. By funding the clinic, the state will ensure that both future attorneys and underserved Nevadans continue to benefit from this unique model of experimental learning-in-service. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Ciara (Keira) Clark, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I graduated last week from the UNLV William S. Boyd School of Law. I am here today to express my strong support for the Thomas and Mack Legal Clinic, not to be confused with the Thomas and Mack Center where UNLV plays its basketball games. During my final year of law school, I had the privilege of working as a student attorney in the Survivor Representation and Advocacy Clinic under the guidance of Professor Courtney Cross.

As a Nevada resident for the past 25 years, I have witnessed how much this valley has grown. I truly cannot imagine our community thriving without the support and services provided by the Thomas and Mack Legal Clinic. In law school, you spend a lot of time reading cases, sometimes really old cases, so it is easy to lose sight of the real-life impact the law has on people. The clinic bridges that gap. My clinic partner and I worked directly with more than ten clients throughout the year. Some of our cases involved temporary protection orders. We assisted survivors of intimate partner violence who were seeking court orders to protect their physical safety. We were not only offering legal assistance but standing with our clients in court. The experience I gained in clinic is the practical hands-on training that

simply cannot be taught in a classroom or learned from a textbook. Thanks to the clinic, I not only have a stronger resume, but I also feel far more confident in my ability to advocate effectively for my future clients.

Where there is a will, I trust this Committee will find the ways and means to support the UNLV Thomas and Mack Legal Clinic. It is not only transforming the lives of Nevada residents for the better; it is also shaping the next generation of Nevada lawyers.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Having no additional callers in support, we will move to opposition. If there is anyone who would like to testify in opposition to Assembly Bill 476, I invite you to the tables. [There was no one.] Do we have anyone on the phone who would like to provide testimony in opposition to Assembly Bill 476? [There was no one.]

Is there anyone who would like to provide neutral testimony on A.B. 476? [There was no one.] We will ask the presenter, who is shaking his head, for any closing remarks. We will close the hearing on Assembly Bill 476, and we will open the hearing on Assembly Bill 593, which makes appropriations to the Interim Finance Committee for costs associated with the implementation of the Enterprise Resource Planning System.

Assembly Bill 593: Makes appropriations to the Interim Finance Committee for costs associated with the implementation of the Enterprise Resource Planning System. (BDR S-1223)

Tiffany Greenameyer, Director, Office of Finance, Office of the Governor:

With me from the Office of Project Management, Office of Finance, Office of the Governor, are Director Brian Bowles and Administrator Brady Phillips to answer any questions the Committee may have. Assembly Bill 593 provides a State General Fund appropriation of \$53,434,995 to the Interim Finance Committee to implement the Enterprise Resource Planning System. This bill also appropriates funding from the State Highway Fund in the amount of \$12,534,135 for the implementation of the Enterprise Resource Planning System. With that, I will stand for any questions.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Members, are there any questions on A.B. 593?

Assemblymember Backus:

I want to thank the Office of Finance, Office of the Governor, for this bill being consistent with the hearings we had and putting that funding under the Interim Finance Committee's review so we can keep on top of it. I know there were times you all thought that was just green and yellows, but there were some in the lower standard in the review. It is important to keep on top of these projects because I know the technology costs our state a lot of money. I look forward to continuing watching CORE.NV after the session ends.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Members, are there any other questions or comments? Not seeing any, we will call to the tables anyone to testify in support of Assembly Bill 593. [There was no one.] Is there anyone on the phone line? [There was no one.]

Do we have anyone in Carson City or Las Vegas who would like to testify in opposition to Assembly Bill 593? [There was no one.] Is there anyone on the phone line who would like to provide testimony in opposition to Assembly Bill 593. [There was no one.]

Is there is anyone in Carson City or Las Vegas who would like to provide neutral testimony on Assembly Bill 593? [There was no one.] Is there anyone on the phone line? [There was no one.] We will ask the presenters if there are any closing comments. Seeing none, we will close the hearing on Assembly Bill 593, and we will open the hearing on Assembly Bill 483, which provides for a priority review of certain applications for the licensure to practice health professions.

Assembly Bill 483: Provides for priority review of certain applications for licensure to practice health professions. (BDR 40-354)

Assemblymember Tracy Brown-May, Assembly District No. 42:

I am very happy to be here to have this opportunity to present the fiscal notes for Assembly Bill 483. This measure comes from the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, and it is meant to address delays in licensure for medical professionals.

The fiscal notes that were presented—I do have an email exchange from Division of Public and Behavioral Health, Department of Health and Human Services, Administrator, Cody Phinney, to remove the fiscal notes from that Division by excluding renewal applications from the requirements. The change in this bill will apply to initial applications starting with bill implementation. This is an amendment that came out this morning that you should have in front of you [[Exhibit E](#)].

The second fiscal note came from the Board of Athletic Trainers and the Board of Dispensing Opticians. The second part of the amendment is section 5, subsection 2, health licensing boards. We eliminated all of the boards except for *Nevada Revised Statutes* Chapters 630, 631, 632, and 633 which deal directly with medical doctors, osteopathic doctors, dentistry, and nursing. This eliminates those two fiscal notes. With that, I am happy to stand for questions.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

We appreciate the work you have done to get to this amendment in order to address the fiscal notes. If there is anyone in the audience associated with the original fiscal notes who wants to testify and put on the record that those fiscal notes have been removed and/or adjusted, that would be great.

**Leticia Metherell, Program Manager, Division of Public and Behavioral Health,
Department of Health and Human Services:**

I would like to confirm that with the amendment, our Division fiscal note will be removed.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Members, are there any questions for the presenter? Seeing none, we will invite to the table anyone who would like to testify in support of Assembly Bill 483. Seeing no one in Carson City or in Las Vegas, we will go to our phone line to see if we have anyone joining us to testify in support of Assembly Bill 483.

Victor Salcido, representing Community Health Alliance:

Community Health Alliance is a federally qualified health center located in Washoe County that serves over 33,000 unique patients. We are in strong support of this bill. As you are all aware, the state of Nevada struggles with a provider shortage when it comes to, specifically, primary medical care, which is one of the services we provide. We provide those services in areas of historical need. With this, anything we can do to help alleviate that, particularly a backlog in licensure, is going to have a positive effect, not only on our organization, but more importantly on the patients we serve in these communities. I would like to thank the Interim Committee for bringing this bill forward. We, again, are in strong support of A.B. 483.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Seeing no additional callers for support testimony, is there anyone who would like to provide testimony in opposition to Assembly Bill 483? [There was no one.] Is there anyone joining us by phone who would like to provide testimony in opposition to Assembly Bill 483? [There was no one.]

If there is anyone who would like to provide neutral testimony on Assembly Bill 483, I invite you to the tables. [There was no one.] Is there anyone joining us by phone who would like to testify in the neutral position on Assembly Bill 483? [There was no one.] We will ask the presenter if there are any closing comments, and she is indicating no, so we will close the hearing on Assembly Bill 483 and we will open the hearing on Assembly Bill 553, which transfers the Division of Emergency Management of the Office of the Military to the Office of the Governor.

Assembly Bill 553: Transfers the Division of Emergency Management of the Office of the Military to the Office of the Governor. (BDR 18-1126)

Tiffany Greenameyer, Director, Office of Finance, Office of the Governor:

I am here to present Assembly Bill 553, which is an implementation bill that transfers the Division of Emergency Management from the Office of the Military to the Office of the Governor. This bill supports the budget closing, and I will stand for any questions.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I believe we have a few questions.

Assemblymember Backus:

I have a couple questions. First, I know this was a budget implementation bill, but some of the funding that was approved by the money committee was contingent upon this bill passing. That is my understanding. Correct?

Tiffany Greenameyer:

I believe that is correct.

Assemblymember Backus:

I am not sure if you can answer this. Why is our Division of Emergency Management being moved out of the Office of Military and put into the Office of the Governor?

Tiffany Greenameyer:

I will try to answer this one. My understanding is it was to allow the Governor to have better access to emergency management. During the pandemic, it was clear that it would have fit better at the Governor's Office.

Assemblymember Backus:

One last question. During one of the subcommittee meetings, there was funding requested for software that could be utilized in the Governor's Office, and then also, it may have been separated from that of the Division of Emergency Management. If you do not know what I am talking about—okay, I will not go there. I will defer to my colleague who has a question.

Assemblymember Watts:

I will help out a bit here as the Chair for the Subcommittee on Public Safety, Natural Resources, and Transportation. This office has moved around quite a bit. It was originally in the Department of Public Safety, and there was a sense that it did not quite fit there. Then it was moved into the Office of the Military and still indicated that it did not quite fit there either. The proposal of moving it within the Governor's Office is really to address emergency management as an issue, and the Division needed to be brought to the cabinet level to work with all of the other agencies in that manner. That is why it was brought forward. We as a subcommittee did approve that in our budget closing, and we hope this is the right place, but we will continue to monitor that in future sessions and make any additional adjustments as necessary.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

So, Assemblymember Watts, if I understand—because I have been here for all of the movements of this—if we find that it is not a good fit, there may be another bill in our future to move it once again?

Assemblymember Watts:

That is correct.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

All right. Members, are there any other questions? Not seeing any, we will invite to the table anyone who would like to provide testimony in support of Assembly Bill 553. Not seeing anyone at the table in Carson City or the table in Las Vegas, we will go to the phone line to see if we have anyone who would like to testify in support of Assembly Bill 553. [There was no one.]

Is there anyone who would like to provide testimony in opposition to Assembly Bill 553? [There was no one.] Is there anyone on the phone lines who would like to provide testimony in opposition to A.B. 553? [There was no one.]

Is there anyone who would like to provide neutral testimony on Assembly Bill 553? [There was no one.] Is there anyone on the phone line to provide neutral testimony? [There was no one.] We will ask the presenter whether she has any closing remarks, and she is shaking her head, no. With that, we will close the hearing on Assembly Bill 553, and we will open the hearing on Assembly Bill 462 (1st Reprint), which revises provisions relating to economic development and invite our Vice Chair to the table.

**Assembly Bill 462 (1st Reprint): Revises provisions relating to economic development.
(BDR 22-823)**

Assemblymember Shea M. Backus, Assembly District No. 37:

I am happy to come before you and present Assembly Bill 462 (1st Reprint), mainly the fiscal impact of this bill. As an overview, this bill is to revise provisions relating to economic development. It contains two parts. The first part of this bill revises existing laws pertaining to inland port. The second part revises existing law implementing the teacher pipeline. I will start with the fiscal impact on the first part for inland ports and industrial parks. I have Stephen Wood of the Office of Economic Development, Office of the Governor (GOED) here to respond to any inquiries that may come up that I am unable to answer.

With the first reprint, an unsolicited fiscal note from the Department of Taxation was submitted, removing its original fiscal note submitted on April 3, 2025, for a onetime cost. When reviewing the fiscal note submitted by the various counties and school districts, many could not ascertain a financial impact due to a lost revenue, while other localities provided no impact.

Assembly Bill 462 (1st Reprint) reiterates existing law providing for inland port authority which allows local government to apply to the Office of Economic Development to create, operate, and maintain an inland port and an inland port authority in a contiguous area. The bill revises this authority to include industrial parks and an industrial park authority. Should a local government choose—and it is their choice to have an industrial park—it can adopt an ordinance creating a tax increment area. The creation of inland parks is completely up to the county or incorporated city, so it would be purely an economic development decision. For

their reported losses, they would be making that decision, if they choose to have an inland port. I can stop there, Madam Chair, if you want to ask questions, or I can go on to our second part.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Members, do you have any questions on the first part of Assembly Bill 462 (1st Reprint), the inland port authority? Not seeing any on that economic development part of this bill, we can move on to the second part—unless your copresenter would like to say something. This is your chance.

Stephen Wood, Director of Strategy and Public Policy, Office of Economic Development, Office of the Governor:

Madam Chair, I think you have heard from me enough already this session.

Assemblymember Backus:

I am keeping Mr. Wood here for company because I do not think he wants to answer any questions regarding this, but we may have some phone-a-friends who may come up for the second part. As for the second portion of the bill pertaining to language to clean up the teacher pipeline bill from last session, which is Assembly Bill 428 from the 82nd Session, this is the portion that had fiscal notes making the bill appealing to Ways and Means.

Well, there have been some unsolicited fiscal notes submitted after the first reprint. There has been a lot of work to remove fiscal notes for this bill. I do want to recognize Daniel Stewart of Brownstein Hyatt Farber and Schrek who has spent a lot of time assisting me on getting the fiscal notes addressed. He is upstairs. I was waiting for him to pop in. If someone has a more complicated question that I cannot answer, I will defer to him.

First, I would like to address the various local government fiscal notes submitted. Mainly, the school districts provided that the costs associated with implementing portions of the Teacher Academy College Pathway Program would be undetermined. Existing law requires only large school districts having more than 100,000 enrolled pupils to offer a program—right now this is only Clark County School District which has provided there will be no impact.

Similar to the inland ports, the Teacher Academy College Pathway Program is optional for our smaller school districts; so, they can elect to implement the program or not. We did notice there was one fiscal note that remained from the White Pine County School District. They had submitted, after the other fiscal notes submitted, an unsolicited fiscal note addressing the teacher pipeline, but, once again, this would be completely optional should they choose to engage. I think they thought it was somehow mandatory because some of the other statutory provisions from the prior bill were not in this bill.

With that, the second fiscal note was from the Nevada System of Higher Education. They removed their fiscal note after the first reprint.

Last, I will address the Department of Education's (NDE) fiscal note. I would like to note, from the initial draft to the first reprint, NDE reduced its ask from three full-time employees to two full-time employees. After a lot of work, we are proposing an amendment to address NDE's concerns about work requiring the two additional employees. From the proposed amendment the requirement for a seal in section 23 has been removed, thus removing the need for the management analyst position. Additional language to clarify the use of the two full-time employees in the Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation (GOWIN) under our Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation for the program that this Committee provided last legislative session has cleared up the remaining need for the one education programs professional position. The goal will be to move these positions next session, hopefully, so that they can align—under NDE if that seems to work out better. But that is a discussion to be had at a later date.

I thank the Committee for your time hearing Assembly Bill 462 (1st Reprint), and I stand ready to answer any questions on the second part. Mr. Stewart is here also to answer any questions.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Mr. Stewart, did you have anything to add to the presentation?

Daniel Stewart, representing Clark County Education Association:

No, it sounds good. There were the three things NDE wanted. They wanted the seal provisions out; those are out. If you notice, there is a proposed amendment to section 22 about working in the middle schools and having folks in the junior high schools; that piece has also been deleted as part of their fiscal note. Then, the big piece is using GOWIN employees who currently stand as employees for the pipeline concept. It looks like that is actually going to eventually be better off in NDE, but they have now worked out an agreement to do a sharing of those employees in that process, so that there would be no need for a fiscal note there.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Members, are there any questions for the presenter and her two phone-a-friends who are at the table now, before we invite those who had fiscal notes on the bill to come to the table and testify to the current status of their fiscal notes? All right, I see no questions from members. I would like to invite up to the table those who had fiscal notes or currently still have fiscal notes associated with A.B. 462 (R1).

Alejandro Rodriguez, Director, Government Relations, Nevada System of Higher Education:

I can confirm that the Nevada System of Higher Education did remove its fiscal note after the first reprint.

Christy McGill, Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement, Department of Education:

Our fiscal note is removed as well.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I appreciate that. And there was a small fiscal note from the Department of Taxation.

Stephen Wood:

We did have some good discussions with the Department of Taxation. That fiscal note was regarding the system they use for tax increment areas. Through our discussions, it was determined that the system does not need a significant update to handle what we are talking about here, since it is not significantly different than other tax increment areas and the Department has agreed that there is no longer a fiscal impact.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

All right, members, are there any questions before we go to testimony? Not seeing any, we will open testimony in support of Assembly Bill 462 (1st Reprint).

Marie Neisess, President, Clark County Education Association:

Thank you, Assemblymember Backus, for bringing this bill forward. I am here today to express my strong support of A.B. 462 (R1). During the 2023 Legislative Session, the Educator Pipeline Bill was passed. However, implementation was challenging. Based on our experience, A.B. 462 (R1) identifies key areas that require adjustments to strengthen the effectiveness of this legislation. As an educator, I recognize the vital importance of providing clear career pathways for our students. Assembly Bill 462 (1st Reprint) will help level the playing field for addressing systemic barriers to career success and ensuring that all students have equal access to career opportunities.

The Teacher Academy College Pathway Program will create a more diverse workforce. By supporting students, the structured pathways program will help address our teacher shortage. Clark County Education Association (CCEA) is committed to supporting Clark County School District (CCSD) students. We are collaborating with the new CCSD superintendent to ensure the successful implementation of the Teacher Academy College Pathway Program. Furthermore, CCEA is investing \$2 million to help offset costs for CCSD students, reinforcing our commitment to tackling the teacher shortage head on. I urge you to support A.B. 462 (R1) to help build a stronger future for Nevada students.

Alejandro Rodriguez:

The Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) is also in support of A.B. 462 (R1). We would like to thank Assemblymember Backus and Mr. Stewart for working with us on amendments, and we urge your support.

**Leonardo Benavides, Director, State Government Affairs and Community Engagement,
Office of Government Affairs and Community Engagement, University of
Nevada, Las Vegas:**

We are here in support of A.B. 462 (R1). Similar to the comments made by NSHE, we want to thank Mr. Dan Stewart, CCEA, and Assemblymember Backus for working with us on the fiscal note. Go inland ports, too.

Taylor Avery, Manager, Political Affairs, Vegas Chamber:

The Vegas Chamber is in support of the fiscal policy of this bill.

Amber Stidham, representing Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance:

We appreciate the shout out for inland ports. We, too, relative to that point, support this bill and appreciate Assemblymember Backus for bringing this forward.

Wesley Harper, Director, Government Affairs, City of North Las Vegas:

We are in support of this bill. The inland port idea is something that would be available to the City. We support the other aspects and thank the sponsor for bringing it forward.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I am not seeing anyone else approach the table in Carson City. Go ahead in Las Vegas.

Emily Osterberg, Director, Government Affairs, Henderson Chamber of Commerce:

We are also in support of this bill.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I am not seeing anyone else at the table in Las Vegas. Do we have anyone joining us by phone who would like to testify in support of Assembly Bill 462 (1st Reprint)?

Mendy Elliott, representing Port of Nevada:

The Port of Nevada is located in Fernley. Assembly Bill 462 (1st Reprint) is a forward-looking measure. We appreciate all the work that has been done. We appreciate the bill sponsor, and we are in very strong support of this measure.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Having no additional callers in support, is there anyone who would like to testify in opposition to Assembly Bill 462 (1st Reprint)? [There was no one.] Do we have anyone on the phones who would like to testify in opposition to Assembly Bill 462 (1st Reprint)? [There was no one.] We will move to neutral. Is there anyone who would like to provide neutral testimony on Assembly Bill 462 (1st Reprint)?

**Taylor Allison, Emergency Management and Government Affairs Director,
Lyon County:**

We testified in opposition during the policy hearing on this bill, but we do believe the reprint and amended language limiting the industrial parks to being adjacent to the inland port does significantly address the county's concerns and potential fiscal impact. We are neutral at this time, and we would like to thank the bill sponsor, Assemblymember Backus and GOED for working with us and hearing our concerns.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Not seeing anyone at the table in Las Vegas to provide testimony in the neutral position, is there anyone on the phone who would like to testify in the neutral position on Assembly Bill 462 (1st Reprint)? [There was no one.] We will go back to the bill sponsor for closing comments.

Assemblymember Backus:

I normally would have waived closing remarks, but I also wanted to thank Director Christopher Sewell for sitting here all morning to be here in case I needed another phone-a-friend. I did not want to leave him out for his hard work involved in this as well. Thank you so much.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

The Director is an amazing phone-a-friend. With that, we will close the hearing on Assembly Bill 462 (1st Reprint). Members, that brings us to 10:30 a.m.—perfect timing to take our recess now to get to our caucus meetings. I will see you all on the floor. We will stand in recess, and we will be back to finish our agenda for the day after the afternoon committee meetings.

[The Committee recessed at 10:31 a.m. and reconvened at 4:29 p.m.]

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Good afternoon. We will bring the Committee on Ways and Means back to order. The room is full. And from what I hear, we have a number of overflow rooms. So that means a number of you were not with us when we started this meeting earlier this morning. [Committee rules and protocol were reviewed.]

Please do not think this is something special for this meeting. This is a fiscal Committee. It is very rare that we hear policies and discuss policies in this Committee. However, this bill that we will have a hearing on today has not had a policy hearing. This will be both its policy and its fiscal hearing. With that, we will get started, and we will open the hearing on Assembly Bill 584 and invite the sponsor to the table.

Assembly Bill 584: Revises provisions relating to education. (BDR 34-1035)

Joe Lombardo, Governor:

I am here to introduce a significant step forward in Nevada's commitment to educational excellence—the Accountability in Education Act, also known as Assembly Bill 584. This bill delivers on a core commitment and belief of mine. Every Nevada student deserves access to a high-quality education regardless of his zip code or his family's income. Last session, in partnership with this Legislature, we made the largest investment in K-12 education in Nevada's history, and I have to thank you for that. Now we have a responsibility to ensure our investment translates into better outcomes for our students. For the first time in Nevada, this legislation establishes a statewide system of accountability for school districts, focusing not only on academic performance but also on governance and organizational health.

Under this Act, every district will receive an annual rating that reflects both student outcomes and the performance of leadership, including school boards and superintendents. The system will be developed by the Department of Education in consultation with families, schools, and local communities, to ensure transparency and shared goals. The Accountability in Education Act includes several critical components designed to improve educational outcomes and system efficiency.

First, for increased accountability, the bill allows for state intervention in cases of persistent governance failures; provides tools to restructure school boards or shift oversight, where necessary, to protect student interests; and ensures that local district leadership is held directly responsible for district performance.

Next, to expand student opportunity and choice, the bill establishes open enrollment policies to give families greater access to schools that meet their needs; ensures funding parity for charter schools; expands school choice options for students in persistently low-performing schools; and provides free access to tutoring services with families empowered to select the provider.

Then to strengthen the educator workforce, the bill offers incentives to attract and retain high-quality teachers and leaders; introduces updated credentialing standards for elementary educators; and enhances collaboration with Nevada's educator preparation programs.

Additionally, to reduce administrative burdens, the bill streamlines and eliminates redundant reporting requirements, allowing educators to focus more time on instruction. Lastly, to invest in early literacy, the bill deepens the state's commitment to Read by Grade 3 and implements the science of reading statewide to build strong foundational skills. As I stated in my State of the State address, every Nevada high school graduate should be college or career ready. That means leaving school with a job that offers a livable wage, military enlistment, or enrollment in a postsecondary institution without the need for remediation.

This is not just an educational goal; it is an economic imperative. Yet, the gap between our highest- and lowest-performing schools is wider than ever. That is not simply a school issue. It is a system-level issue. While some schools are excelling, too many students remain underserved. This legislation aims to change that.

In closing, the Accountability in Education Act aligns with the expectations our students and communities rightfully hold. It gives families more agency and provides educators with tools and support they need to succeed. It ensures that every child has access to a high-quality education all while holding our systems to the same high standards we ask of our students and teachers. We have made the investment. Now is the time to match it with bold action, meaningful accountability, and a shared commitment to excellence. With that, I respectfully urge your support for Assembly Bill 584. Now, I would like to invite Superintendent Canavero and his team to walk through the bill in greater detail with you, and I thank you for your time.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Members, do you have any questions for Governor Lombardo before he leaves? Not seeing any, please go ahead.

Steve Canavero, Interim Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education:

Thank you, Chair Monroe-Moreno, Vice Chair Backus, and members of the Assembly Ways and Means Committee, for the opportunity to speak today. I anticipate a lively discussion, and I have about 20 minutes of prepared remarks. I anticipate a discussion around leadership and governance, and if this last week is any indication, our conversation may focus on one side of the equation in this Act, and that is the consequences.

The Act is a complex policy proposal mirroring the complexity of our education system and acknowledging there are no simple solutions ready to deploy next biennium to address the post-pandemic reality: the Governor mentioned, an acceleration in the widening gap between our high- and low-achieving students. Focusing on the consequences of the accountability in the Act is understandable. Removing a superintendent—assuming control over decisions typically reserved for an elected board of trustees—should draw our attention, be taken seriously, and debated. But before I dig into the detail, I do not want to lose sight of the Governor's intention that the Accountability in Education Act is a means, not an end.

As the Act is written, required measures impacting local school board governance authority would be available after eight years of our continued inability to deliver results for kids. That is the entirety of a student's elementary education. The Act has a long-term commitment. The Act is a means to ensure every student, family, and community benefits from the social and economic mobility that a quality education provides. Practically speaking, the Act is a means towards alignment and collaboration across our education system. I envision what we could accomplish if, over that eight-year period I mentioned before, our boards, state and local, our superintendents, state and local, and the state, sat on the same side of the table, hyper-focused on student outcomes and committed to establishing the conditions at schools for teachers, school leaders, and students to thrive and achieve. We can do better, we must do better, and we can only do it together.

The Act also recognizes that our education challenges are not the responsibility of any one person, group, principal, or teacher. They are a shared challenge, and they demand shared accountability. The Act is also a statement of our values. It says that accountability is a measure of our willingness to accept responsibility for outcomes, and not just outcomes in classrooms but at every level of the system. The core message boils down to: If we want better results, we must hold ourselves responsible for delivering them. And as the Governor said, we must address the system, not schools.

I will walk through a few of the major components of the bill and how it aims to transform our approach to education in Nevada. I will begin with the foundation of accountability—holding systems accountable and not schools.

First, the bill establishes a statewide system of accountability for school districts—the same statewide system of accountability that is the star rating for schools, as an analogy. Throughout our history, accountability has focused on individual schools. This Act expands that lens to include entire school districts, holding leadership, school boards, and superintendents accountable for student outcomes. The Department of Education is tasked in the Act with developing the system in meaningful consultation with parents and guardians, schools, students, and districts. The district rating should not just be numbers, but they should reflect shared goals and transparent targets that families and the public understand.

Every district will receive an annual rating based on how well its schools are performing collectively. But it goes deeper than overall performance of schools, as the Governor mentioned, and includes governance or organizational performance. I will talk a little bit about how this will work. The superintendent of public instruction is empowered in the Act to designate a district as low-performing. The superintendent of public instruction shall designate a district as low-performing based upon whether or not that district failed to meet districtwide achievement and performance targets or receives one of the two lowest ratings. On the organization or governance side, the superintendent of public instruction may designate a district as low-performing if that district experiences leadership instability, governance instability, financial hardship, or systemic inequity in access, resources, or outcomes among pupils who are economically disadvantaged, major racial and ethnic groups, pupils with disabilities, or pupils who are English-learners.

If a district is designated as low-performing based on the aggregate school performance or governance issues, or a combination of the two, they are placed on probation not to exceed two years. This is what I would call the first tier. Districts on probation must develop a district improvement plan and/or a school board improvement plan. These plans must outline exactly how they will fix the problems and improve results. During this probationary period, the state monitors the plan's implementation, provides support, and ensures the district provides transparency to the public through quarterly reporting of progress at board meetings and public posting on websites. When the district meets the expectations in the improvement plan, the district is removed from that tier or removed from probation.

If the district fails to meet these expectations, support and consequences would follow. If a district is rated as low-performing for two consecutive years or continues to show systemic issues like leadership instability or inequitable practices, it will be labeled as underperforming, either for purposes of correcting matters of governance or to address the performance of the district schools.

For matters of governance, if a district is identified as underperforming, the superintendent of public instruction has options called targeted state oversight. These include having direct involvement in the process of decision-making, establishing governance or operational mandates, appointing a state monitor to oversee activities of the board—and in section 14, the Governor would appoint the state monitor—and of course, evaluate and monitor on an ongoing basis.

For those districts that are underperforming based upon the collective performance of their schools, state interventions include appointing a state monitor to oversee the improvement in the district, replacing district leadership, reallocating school district resources to prioritize low-performing schools, or assume state control over specific district functions. If that option is taken, the Act requires a district recovery plan to be developed in collaboration with the school district. Ideally, sustained progress is made to remove them from the status and resume full governance responsibilities. If they fail to make progress, then the state can extend oversight for up to three additional years or choose a combination of other measures.

The third tier would kick in and the superintendent of public instruction may take additional measures of state oversight with approval from the Governor via executive order if, after five years, the district continues to struggle. These include reassignment of powers, addition of board members who are voting, and/or a state management team that could assume full governance authority. The whole goal is to return the governance to the board if substantial progress or goals are met through a phased approach. Throughout this section the regulatory authority sits with the superintendent of public instruction for matters including determination of adequate progress, which would help identify when a district moves out of probation or out of that second tier. The message is clear: When systems fail our students, we come together to act.

We will move now from the district level to individual schools. You will see parallels with the district and some consistencies with the current statewide system. The superintendent of public instruction will designate schools, as is the case today, and the superintendent shall designate: if in at least two of the preceding three school years, the school receives one of the two lowest ratings; achieves 20th percentile in English Language Arts (ELA) or math proficiency; 60 percent or less in high school graduation rate; or more than 50 percent of pupils do not achieve adequate proficiency in reading by completing third grade.

Like the districts, a low-performing school in that first year is placed on probation not to exceed two years, and they, too, would develop an improvement plan, with the reviewal, and approval or denial with reasons, at the state level that it is implemented. The state superintendent may appoint an independent school improvement official to support the school's progress. A persistently underperforming designation occurs if a school does not satisfy probation, or two years after a public school is placed on probation, whichever is earlier. The superintendent may extend probation one additional year or implement corrective measures.

When a school receives a designation as persistently underperforming, a menu of targeted corrective measures becomes available. I will go through these rather quickly. The superintendent of public instruction may replace the principal or other key personnel—there is a conceptual amendment [[Exhibit F](#)] for this particular provision to clarify that if a principal, teacher, or administrator is removed from his position under this section and holds an effective or highly-effective rating in their current evaluation, the superintendent of the district shall reassign the individual to an open position of equal responsibility and

compensation. The second corrective measure is direct management by the Department where the superintendent of public instruction would be responsible for the operations of the school.

The next three require the superintendent of public instruction to issue a request for qualifications or information from the community writ large to inform one or more of these next corrective measures. The first is to transfer management of the school that is persistently underperforming to the city, or county if an unincorporated area. They would be designated as the Local Education Agency (LEA), appoint a municipal school director, and, for clarity, this is permissive; this is not a mandate.

The fourth corrective measure, if interest exists, is to convert to a charter school. Again, the superintendent would issue a request for qualifications, adhering to *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) Chapter 388A procedures for charter sponsorship.

Lastly, an option for corrective measures is to convert the school to an innovation school. The innovation school requires a team of two teachers and an administrator employed at the school at the time of designation to develop a school operating plan and an innovation plan. If approved, the innovation team assumes full operational control of the school. They have the opportunity to request waivers from the district. They would remain a school of the district.

The superintendent of public instruction, in order to pursue any of the corrective measures, must develop a rationale and a comprehensive implementation plan and submit that to the Governor for his or her approval or denial with reasons. Generally, these corrective measures are in place until improvement occurs or at a comprehensive review at year five or six.

On the fiscal side, the independent school improvement official I mentioned is paid for out of the school's budget, but section 18 in the Act allows the Department to request access to the Education Stabilization Account to support district or school interventions.

As the Governor mentioned—systems, not just schools. So, with the foundation of accountability as a means to ensure every student has access to social and economic mobility, we will turn our attention to other aspects of the policy organized around themes, many of which are available earlier than the time needed to build the accountability system and the tiers of support and intervention that I just covered.

A theme is around agency access and choice. A major part of this bill includes a focus on expanding opportunity, especially for families in underperforming zones. This part of the bill recognizes the truth that some families need more than hope; they need access, choices, and the agency to act. This Act amends existing law. City and county governments located within low-performing school districts are empowered to sponsor new charter schools or allow existing charters to expand if those schools serve students from the attendant zones of persistently underperforming schools. The Act requires every district to implement a system of open enrollment where students can apply to any public school in their district, regardless

of zoning; families can select up to three schools in order of preference. If more students apply than the school has capacity for, a lottery system ensures fairness with priority for students coming from low-performing schools. Districts must publicly share school capacity data, make the process transparent, and provide for transportation either directly or through a subsidy for students in a school that is rated low-performing. The Department is required to evaluate success of the open enrollment program, including for low-performing students' access to high-performing schools.

For students zoned to chronically low-performing schools, the state is offering additional options. The Office of the State Treasurer will create a program called the Nevada Integrity in Academic Funding, which includes Resources for Inspiring Student Excellence (RISE) Accounts, to be used by families to pay for eligible education expenses as outlined in section 37 and section 38. A couple of points to draw your attention to: The income from the RISE Account shall not be considered for a person to determine eligibility for benefits under Medicaid. The Treasurer maintains reporting requirements. Funding is set at 90 percent of what the district would otherwise have received as a maximum. Sections 37 and 38 incorporate safeguards designed explicitly to comply with constitutional requirements. Section 38, subsection 1, clearly indicates that funding for RISE Accounts must come from a separate legislative appropriation, ensuring no diversion from existing education or allocated funds. Additionally, it explicitly prohibits any reduction of the statewide base per-pupil funding amount for public education. Section 37 further protects against improper use of state or federal education funds.

There is a conceptual amendment [[Exhibit F](#)] to clarify that students attending a private school under this program may elect to take the state exam at their zone school, as written, or a nationally norm-referenced assessment at the school of attendance. These accounts prioritize students in low-performing schools, those attending overcrowded schools, or students living on tribal lands and the military. Participating schools must follow nondiscrimination rules and meet specific quality criteria outlined in section 37. This is about empowering families with the options and the means to act.

The Act includes a path to empower educators and communities as well. A new tool in this bill is the innovation school model. This was mentioned as one of the state corrective measures from section 35 for schools, but it is not solely limited to this scenario. The bill opens the opportunity in section 41, expanding NRS Chapter 388G. Innovation schools are public schools within their district with enhanced flexibility and autonomy in budgeting, staffing, curriculum, and scheduling, specifically designed to pilot creative equity-driven solutions that increase achievement. These schools are not exempt from accountability. They are held to a high standard through a performance contract with measurable outcomes. What they gain is the freedom to do things differently, intentionally, and urgently. If several innovation schools are in the same geographic region or share common strategies or goals, they can join to form an innovation zone. These zones enable collaboration between schools, pooled resources, shared supports—essentially a lab for systemic improvement within a public school framework. Innovation status is not imposed; there is a structured innovation plan, and it requires a majority vote of school staff. This ensures buy-in and a sense of

ownership for educators. If schools improve under innovation status, the superintendent at the district may phase out oversight and return it to the normal district governance or maintain its innovation status.

The second theme is around great schools and great educators. No education reform works without effective teachers and school leaders. This bill introduces new support systems and performance standards for educators in sections 47 through 52. If a postprobationary teacher or administrator receives an evaluation designating his or her overall performance as ineffective or minimally effective for two consecutive years, then there is a required performance improvement plan with measurable goals and required supports. This plan is based upon a framework that is to be developed by the teaching and leading council. The district superintendent may place a postprobationary teacher or administrator on a two-year period of probation if the teacher or administrator is consistently ineffective in meeting instructional practice standards or fails to demonstrate adequate progress under the improvement plan. Their performance is reviewed quarterly and supported by the district. Upon the conclusion of the probationary period, if the teacher or administrator met the improvement goals, he is removed from probation. If not, the superintendent or board may move to dismiss or not rehire the employee; the employees are entitled to notice and hearing per NRS Chapter 391.

Great teaching and leading begins with strong preparation. This bill establishes a monitoring system or an improvement system for state-funded programs of administrator prep. It requires the Department to develop a system to report administrator prep programs that are state funded, and their impact on school achievement and pupil achievement of those school administrators who complete the program. It is a growth measure, comparative analysis, direct impact—it is entirely centered around making recommendations to the State Board of Education and the Nevada System of Higher Education for continuous improvement.

The bill does not just focus on improving performance; it also rewards excellence. Through the Excellence in Education Account which can hold up to \$30 million, districts and charter schools that opt in can offer financial incentives, up to 10 percent of base salary, to educators who have maintained a highly effective rating for at least three years for teachers, or five years for administrators. Again, it is voluntary. District eligibility is met if 85 percent or less of the administrators and teachers receive a highly effective rating for two consecutive years. In addition to the incentive, the bill includes other incentives like career leadership advancement, professional development, recognition opportunities, and consideration for mentorship of others. The funding mechanism is established in the Act but generally, if the Education Stabilization Account and the ending fund balance of districts and charter reserves exceed 20 percent of the total appropriation from the State Education Fund, then money can be transferred to the Excellence in Education Account.

Two more things—reducing reporting burden and commonsense protections. As the Governor mentioned, educators can now petition to suspend or modify certain administrative reporting requirements if they can show it would reduce inefficiency without harming transparency. There are also civil and criminal immunity protections for school employees

who act in good faith to stop physical altercations or threats to student safety provided they act within their role and without reckless or grossly negligent conduct. Great schools, great educators, and commonsense protections reflect sections of the law that are about professionalism with compassion, support where it is needed, accountability where it is earned, and protection where it matters most.

The final theme I will cover is around literacy and educator preparation, and specifically the science of reading. The bill also addresses one of the more critical areas of student development: literacy with a focus on the state's alignment with the science of reading. It requires the State Board of Education to develop model curriculum, specifically in K-3, including phonics-based instruction and the integration of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) into instruction in English language arts. The bill also requires the Council to Establish Academic Standards for Public Schools to establish K-3 standard alignment with science of reading and STEM integration with English language arts. The new Empowering Parents Account is created with \$1 million in funding in each fiscal year to help families pay for tutoring and literacy services, particularly for students identified under the Read by Grade 3 Act. Support is prioritized for lower-income families and must come from an approved list of providers offering evidence-based solutions.

On the educator side, by July 1, 2028, K-3 teachers will complete training and receive an endorsement in foundational literacy aligned with the science of reading. The state's Commission on Professional Standards in Education will work with the Nevada System of Higher Education to ensure teacher prep programs meet this requirement. There will also be a required ongoing professional development for K-3 teachers, administrators, and paraprofessionals in these practices, to be completed by the end of the 2027-2028 school year. There are some active discussions in this particular area on this topic to make sure that we align the intention of the Act to support and prepare our educators without creating additional barriers to enter into the profession or electing to teach in elementary schools.

And, finally, there is a STEM literacy pilot program that will launch, serving K-3, integrating science and reading instruction as part of the state's push for early academic enrichment.

To wrap up, the Nevada Accountability in Education Act is a transformative step, a means to focus our attention and support on students and outcomes. It does not just focus on schools. It looks at systems, at inequity, and inertia; it gives families more voice, more choice, and more support. It gives educators more tools and higher expectations; and it gives the state and community the authority it needs to act when students are left behind. The Act's major provisions go into effect July 1, 2026, giving districts and the state time to prepare. This time, obviously, needs to be used wisely. Change at this scale takes planning, commitment, and clarity. Chair Monroe-Moreno, that wraps up my comments, and I am happy to answer questions at this time.

[[Exhibit G](#) was submitted but not discussed and will become part of the record.]

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

That was a great high-level overview. There are 71 sections to this bill, and you went through sections at different points in time, so, you are going to hate me, but I am going to ask you to walk through this bill section-by-section. We will start with section 1 and end at section 71, so we know exactly what is in each section before we go to questions.

Steve Canavero:

I am happy to do so. I organized it at a high level because there are themes that are pulled out, or programs that are in two different sections of the bill, that are far apart from each other, so they are hard to bring together to understand the full picture. I can begin, and you can tell me if it is helpful, and I am happy to adjust as you all need.

The first section addresses the ability of educators to propose to the district superintendent and then to the state, around efficiency, to forego a particular report. Section 2 is conforming.

Section 3 is the establishment of the statewide system of accountability for districts. Section 4 clarifies the dates and the reporting requirements for that accountability system. It takes into consideration test irregularities and things of that nature.

Section 5 is the determinations of the ratings. If you are familiar with the statewide system of accountability, this should look familiar. This is essentially the school-based statewide system of accountability—the language—but it applies it to the districts.

Section 6 might be of interest. Section 6, subsection 1, paragraph (a) is where the superintendent of public instruction is empowered to designate schools as low-performing. It provides the criteria in paragraph (a)(1) and paragraph (a)(2). This would be for a school district, specific to the aggregate performance of their schools. Then, if you look at subsection 1, paragraph (b), this is the permissive designation specific to the four conditions that are related to governance. In my opening comments, I talked about the statewide system of accountability applying to districts. There is a "shall" around collective student performance at the district level, but then there is also a governance—and that is a "may" provision to designate a district as low-performing; this is where it is explained, in subparagraphs (1), (2), (3), and (4) of paragraph (b).

Section 7 then moves from district to a public school. There are transparency requirements and posting requirements within the bill. Across the district and the school statewide systems of accountability, there is an additional requirement for transparency and posting of information for parents and families across those two. I do not want to skip that, but it is across a number of these sections, and we are beginning to see that here.

Section 8 and section 9 are conforming. I would turn your attention to page 20. This is for the accountability report card—our public-facing report card. The report card collects school accountability information—the star rating system—but it also includes other information here. You see some comparable results of pupils in comparable school districts in other states

where available or where applicable, and students in school—and you see it repeated again. So, it is a broader view of relative performance, added not to the statewide system of accountability, but added to our public reporting system.

Section 10 includes—you heard earlier about the focus on literacy. So, this is the public reporting for literacy and the proportion of students demonstrating adequate proficiency in the subject area of reading.

Section 13 begins with the provisions of probation and begins to explain how probation would work. It also talks about noticing requirements. I draw your attention to section 13, subsection 3, where it gets into that existing appointed members would become voting members for that period. I believe that has been a conversation—just to point that out. The probationary period . . . it talks about the school board improvement plan.

Here is where you get two different perspectives that you have to tie back together. How they got in—whether it is governance or aggregate performance—does have an impact on some of these sections, but it is referenced back to the section in law, so it is hard to catch. Here, it describes the probationary status and what the plan would require: a self-assessment of the board of trustees, specific actions, description of roles and responsibilities, strategies of the board of trustees to support implementation, requiring the members to complete training for professional development, measurable milestones—those things you would hope to expect in an improvement plan at the State Board level. Then it requires a rather quick turnaround by the superintendent to review or to deny with reasons and to provide improvement. There are public posting requirements towards the end of section 13.

That leads us into section 14 which says if, in that first tier of probation, they have made adequate progress which is defined in regulation, they can be removed from probation. It further goes on to say if they have not made adequate progress after two school years, if the superintendent of public instruction finds that the board of the districts failed to make the adequate progress as defined, then the Department may implement targeted state oversight or initiate state oversight. So, this gets into the second tier following probation for school districts.

It continues. There are qualifications included. If it is determined that the Governor would want to appoint a state monitor, it talks about the state monitor's qualifications in terms of expertise, but also of no conflicts. It also talks about the designation of underperforming school districts for five consecutive years and the board of trustees having failed to make adequate progress, and the reassignment of some or all of the powers. The bottom of page 26 to the top of 27 specifically calls out the section I mentioned regarding the Governor's role in approving the corrective measures. Specifically, the executive order must be specific and attend to the provisions listed there.

It also talks about the appointment of other board members in more detail than I did. It includes the types of expertise you might expect to go on to a board that is struggling, the type of term that they should serve, and, of course, that they would be voting. Those are

the additional measures. On page 28, as we continue through, you begin to see the Department's responsibilities to evaluate and make determinations based upon the progress—extending interventions for up to three additional years—the provisions as to when that would be possible. Then you begin to get into the reporting function. There is reporting across the Act—transparency for the public around school performance—but there are also reporting requirements built in so as the Department learns, the Department evaluates, the Department tracks, and you all are kept in the loop.

Section 15 then moves from a school district that is underperforming for specific purposes of governance. This section moves now to the collective performance of the schools. This is where those different but similar and parallel constructions are. Here, you see the difference in the plans. An improvement plan that a board would engage in if they are deemed underperforming due to board and governance issues would be different than an improvement plan focused on student outcomes. You could see how the two plans might work together for a board as well. You will see the long list there of what the performance improvement plan for the school district would include.

I am trying to also make sure I hit some high points. Page 32 gets into the supports. I mentioned that no one person could do this. There are a number of opportunities, not just to collaborate and sit at the same side of the table with our districts and our school leaders, but we have state monitors and improvement specialists, as well. On the bottom of page 32, it also mentions where we could engage a state monitor, and it gives, again, the types of qualifications that a state monitor would need.

The section on page 33 then goes into similar constructs from the governance causation. It goes into aggregate school performance and what would happen if the probationary period were exhausted, and they have not made adequate progress as defined in the regulations. You can see paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) on page 33 talk about the provisions I discussed, with school district leadership allocating district resources or assuming state control. The end of section 15 includes the reporting provisions.

Section 16 is the transportation for pupils. It is a qualifier to the other section of law that I will talk about a little bit later in the Act.

Section 17 is the creation of the Excellence in Education Account. This is where the account is established, where you all would establish it; you would create the ceiling of \$30 million. Section 17, subsection 4 on page 37 then describes the flow of priority in terms of how money enters into the Excellence in Education Account. Subsection 7 clarifies what the money in the Excellence in Education Account may be used for only to award grants to school districts, charter schools, and university schools for highly gifted students to provide nonrecurring financial incentives, including without limitation bonuses or financial awards to teachers, school administrators, or other educational personnel who demonstrate . . . and then it goes on.

Section 18 is conforming. Section 18, subsection 4, paragraph (e) does include the ability that I mentioned to come to the Interim Finance Committee if we are required to undertake extraordinary measures to oversee or allocate resources to a school district that is designated as a low-performing school district or underperforming school district pursuant to section 6, also for schools as well. The provision is there, just in case.

Obviously, because this is a long-term Act, this next biennium is preparation. Any of the corrective measures or some of the accountability provisions do not kick in until the following biennium.

I am on section 19, on page 41, if you are reading along at home with me. This is the charter schools and provision of transportation. We are still conforming here. We can move quickly.

Section 20 is conforming. Page 44 refers to our Pupil-Centered Funding Plan and the Commission. There are some recommendations and suggestions there. I did not cover that in great detail. If you have questions related to that, I could phone a friend and have my deputy superintendent speak to those.

Section 22 is where the open enrollment system is established. It is detailed from the bottom of page 47 to page 49.

Section 23 then discusses transportation. Each school district shall provide transportation services or subsidize transportation services for pupils who: (a) are currently attending or zoned to attend a public school designated as low-performing and (b) apply and are selected to attend a school in the same school district that has received one of the three highest ratings of performance pursuant to the statewide system of accountability. It caps a subsidy so that the subsidy is an actual expenditure in an amount not more than 200 percent of the average per-pupil transportation cost of the school district for the immediately preceding fiscal year.

Under section 24, I had mentioned that the Department is obligated to review and evaluate this program of open enrollment. That includes an analysis of equity of access to high-performing public schools to determine if all pupils, regardless of background, have fair access to higher-performing schools. That is all on page 51, and then, of course, reporting provisions.

Section 25 establishes the Empowering Parents Account. This is the account that can support parents to receive services specifically designated for students who qualify under the Read by Grade 3 Act so long as they are evidence-based and approved. The Account is administered at the district level [*sic*].

I draw your attention to section 26, on page 53; the income qualifications are in subsection 3 around the prioritization. The parent or legal guardian of a pupil who resides in a household with an adjusted gross income of \$60,000 per year is the first priority, and then it goes through the priority tiers. The end of section 26 provides some guidance on how the administration of this program would work. It has the definition of adjusted gross income.

Section 27 is the list of service providers in good standing who offer literacy interventions, tutoring, and other related services that are evidence-based, align with standards of content and performance, and align with the literacy goals, standards, and guidelines. Then it describes who would be eligible for these expenses under the Parent-Selected Intervention Options.

Section 28 is where we talk about placing on probation a public school that has been designated as low-performing. Remember that conversation 15 minutes ago, earlier in the bill? This is where we pick it up again. The superintendent of public instruction places each public school that has been designated as low-performing on a period of probation.

Here is where the bill talks about how you determine the two years: the planning requirements and the rapid approval similar to the districts. They are very similar as you get down into this level in terms of how they are operated; again, an independent school improvement official to help oversee the progress of the public school qualifications, similar to the state monitor; the actions and requirements of the independent school official; and then what happens at the end. Either they leave that first tier if they have made adequate progress, or they could be designated as persistently underperforming. Then it talks about the triggers that flip the switches if they are persistently underperforming and the options, such as extending probation or implementing any of the corrective measures described in sections 29 through 36 of the bill.

Sections 29 through 36—section 29 identifies the list of corrective measures that I described in my opening. It also identifies that process I was referring to: When implementing corrective measure, the superintendent shall issue a request for letters of interest from eligible entities to provide information on the process of selecting the corrective measure. The eligible entities that may submit a letter of interest in response to such a request include charter management organizations, education management organizations, cities or counties, teachers or administrators employed at the school—that is specifically aimed at the innovation school.

Then, 60 days afterwards, the superintendent would need to develop the corrective measure, the detailed rationale, a comprehensive implementation plan outlining the steps required to execute the measure, and then the Governor or the Governor's designee would review the proposal for the corrective measure and either approve or deny with reasons . . . requirements around technical assistance . . . then each year, in this initial six-year term, for the evaluation.

At the end of section 29, before we get into section 30, there is a specific provision stating should any of these corrective measures be employed, they are not to be construed to prohibit or supersede a sponsor of a charter school from taking any action to enforce the charter contract or any provision of NRS Chapter 388A. So, if the charter school is already under particular corrective action or under the autoclosure provisions, then anything in here would not infringe upon that right of the sponsor to take such action.

Sections 30, 31, 32, 33, and 34—I might be able to talk a little bit about these fairly quickly. Each of these sections describes in more detail how the specific corrective action, if chosen, is actually addressed. I will go through section 30.

Section 30 is around the corrective action of replacing a principal or other key personnel as one of the corrective actions that could be proposed and approved by the Governor. You see how it is done: The superintendent of public instruction and the superintendent of schools in the school district; provisions for local precincts, of course, are taken into consideration; the appointment of a new principal; the replacement or reassignment process must comply with all applicable state and federal laws including, without limitation, those related to the collective bargaining agreements and employment protections acts. I referenced that briefly—it is there in full detail on page 61. Then it talks about administrators and teachers or other staff who are replaced or reassigned, and it talks about the incentives that could be in place to attract teachers to the school.

Section 31 does the similar operational mechanics for a school designated as persistently underperforming but the corrective measure being direct management by the Department. Section 32 does the same, but for a city or county in which the public school is located. Section 33 does the same but for a conversion to a charter school. Section 34 would be for the transition to an innovation school.

Section 35 digs in a little bit deeper on the innovation schools. It talks about the network of the innovation schools. It outlines why they exist: improving pupil performance, providing member innovation schools with flexibility, and fostering innovations. And then it goes into what all the network schools must do: establish an oversight committee with one representative from the innovation school team, additional stakeholders determined by the superintendent of public instruction, and a designated chair. Section 35 also provides, at the top of page 71, that staff at an innovation school within a network could pursue a unique contract with a collective bargaining unit if they choose.

Section 36 addresses the corrective measure of management by city and county imposed on the ownership and the possessions of facilities. This treats the transfer agreements and the various agreements that need to be maintained between the district and the school, how that would occur, and the parameters of that relationship.

Section 37 is the designation of a low-performing school after three consecutive years as a chronically low-performing school. This section discusses a chronically low-performing school designation and the criteria to meet that, which eligible pupils may participate in expanded achievement option, and it talks about alternative educational settings as well.

Section 38 is where the State Treasurer adopts regulations to carry out the Nevada Integrity in Academic Funding Program and the RISE Accounts. This relates to the expanded achievement options in the prior section for students attending a chronically low-performing school.

On page 76, there is adoption of regulatory authority, but the cap is at 90 percent and not to exceed the actual expenses and payments from the RISE Account. There are prohibitions on entities that receive payment from the RISE Account; they cannot refund it directly to a parent on whose behalf the payment was made. There are reporting provisions and a definitional section on page 78 that continues into page 79. Qualified pupils include military siblings, child of a parent in the armed forces, and people with disabilities. Section 39 covers the transportation provisions.

Section 40 at the top of page 82 is the revision to statute that allows a city or county to sponsor new charter schools or expand the cap on their existing charter schools so long as the increase in enrollment of the existing school or operation of additional campuses will serve pupils residing in the zone of attendance of a public school that is designated as low-performing or persistently underperforming.

Section 41 allows for the innovation status to apply not just as a corrective measure but allows the district and the schools within the district—it is more of the schools requesting than it is the district developing. But this section 41 is similar, and it also allows schools within the State Public Charter School Authority, as well, to seek innovation status.

Section 42 is the pilot program. There is an appropriation in the bill to support the pilot program. It describes how the Department will carry this out. This is an opportunity for districts—not a mandate.

Section 43 is the model curriculum that I mentioned around literacy and the science of reading.

Section 44 talks about the standards that the Council to Establish Academic Standards for Public Schools would need to adopt, and the integration of science and technology.

Section 46 covers civil and criminal immunity. I touched on it pretty quickly, but you can see that there are provisions here to ensure that whatever action is taken, it is done in a manner that is not indifferent to the rights and safety of persons harmed.

Section 47 is the performance improvement plan requirement for postprobationary administrators. Here it requires the Teacher and Leaders Council of Nevada to develop that performance improvement plan that I referenced. That performance improvement plan is then used to support teachers and administrators who are ineffective or minimally effective for two consecutive years. They work on that improvement plan—that is the "shall." Then it goes into what should be covered, without limitation, in professional development—you can see those listed in subsection 4, paragraphs (a), (b), and (c)—and the responsibilities for ongoing mentorship or leadership.

In section 48 is the "may." Principals are working with the teacher, or a principal supervisor is working with the principal. The superintendent of schools may place a probationary administrator on probation for a period of two years if, based on the evaluation, they are not making adequate progress under the performance improvement plan. Page 91, in further detail, includes the administrator.

Section 49 takes into consideration the local school precinct.

Section 50 is the monitoring and tracking system for state-funded providers who provide training for school administrators across the state. Subsection 3—you should be familiar—talks about analyzing relative performance, be presented at a meeting of the State Board, and include, without limitation, these evaluations.

Section 51 is the Teachers and Leaders Council of Nevada. This is regulatory authority to establish the performance improvement plan for a postprobationary teacher. It talks about what the performance improvement plan should entail for the teacher.

Section 52, similarly with the administrator, this just provides similar language for a postprobationary teacher.

Section 53 is where we talk about the regulations that require a teacher to obtain from the Department an endorsement to be eligible to teach kindergarten and grades 1, 2, and 3. It talks about what the regulations to qualify for that endorsement would entail. Section 54 is the eligibility to teach with that endorsement when it is effective.

In section 56 we are back on the postprobationary overall performance. These are notice requirements under the postprobationary work.

Section 57 and section 58 is the professional development on the science of reading that is approved by the Department and who it is completed by. This continues with more reporting and transparency for the course of professional development.

Section 59 is the incentive program. We established the Excellence in Education Account earlier in the bill; here is how we go about furnishing the incentive program. Here is where it talks about the eligibility—if the program is established by a board of trustees of a school district, how that money is allocated. Subsection 4 on page 105 gets into the three- and five-year anniversary dates and the 10 percent of the annual base salary for teachers or school administrators. It also includes the provisions I mentioned related to leadership advancement, professional development, and so on. And we have regulatory authority.

Section 60 continues with the eligibility. Districts or charter schools are eligible if the proportion of teachers or administrators who receive an evaluation designating their performance as highly effective for two consecutive years or less, is 85 percent or less. There is a provision somewhere in that where 85 percent goes to teachers, and 15 percent goes to principals.

In section 61, I did not mention this in my opening comments. We will linger here for a minute or so. The Education Service Center is created. This is a new entity for our state. As I understand it, there are 11 states that do not have these federally recognized support centers across their state. This Act treats it a bit differently—not different. This Act takes a theme that appears in other states where these federally recognized education service agencies can sometimes specialize—special education, for example, is a really common one across the country. This Act is saying that this Education Service Center, if adopted by this Legislature, would focus on school performance and district and board performance. It is a single-service entity that is a partner to the state to support the improvement of schools and our boards. So, it is consistent with this Act, and it is one of the arms that could support the state in doing the work that I just quickly covered in the beginning of this Act: school improvement officials and state monitors. In a perfect world, we would not continue to pay for out-of-state folks to come in, but we would actually have a place where our capacity would be developed and housed. It talks about the board and how the board is constituted; eligibility for funding; its limits—it cannot impose a tax; what it can do: enter into agreements with any agency or political subdivision including, without limitation, counties, cities, or school districts, for the purposes carried out.

Then, carrying over onto page 109, it says the Education Service Center may carry out activities set forth in this title on behalf of the Department and provide services, and support initiatives and efforts of the state to improve the performance of schools and school districts in the state, including without limitation, evidence-based and research-based support for improving schools and school districts. The superintendent of public instruction has regulatory authority for the Education Service Center.

Starting at section 62, conforming changes take us deep into the back of the bill. In section 63, we are also asking for the regional professional development program to assist in developing and providing training on whole school improvement efforts. It takes a village. Section 64 has more specifics related to the civil and criminal immunity. Section 65 is just about the Board of Regents ensuring that the science of reading is incorporated into their teacher education programs. In section 66 are the appropriations to the State Treasurer of \$425,000 a year to prepare the program. In section 67 are the appropriations for the K-3 STEM literacy pilot of \$1 million in each fiscal year. In section 68 is \$4 million in each year of the biennium to the Department of Education for support.

Importantly, sections 1 to 65, section 69, and section 70 of the Act are effective upon passage, but for all other purposes, the effective date is July 1, 2026. This is where I mentioned that we have a year to prepare—a year to do a lot of things. For example, the district statewide accountability system is prepared the first year of the biennium, launched in the second year, and then we begin to stand up the supports and accountability provisions.

Madam Chair, I hope that was sufficient, or would you like me to go back through?

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Going through it once is more than enough. We are losing people in the audience—I do not want anyone else to fall asleep. We do have a number of members with questions, but I am going to start with a fiscal question before I go to the list of members who have questions.

I do not see a fiscal note of any kind from any division that would be impacted by this bill nor from the school districts that will be impacted if this bill were to pass. We have had a number of much smaller requests from members on education policies for which NDE has submitted fiscal notes—for a few hundred thousand dollars. This is an over-100-page bill that is requiring a lot, with a number of things for which I do not really see where the appropriations are going to come from, or whether NDE has the staff to do it. So, the first question is, can you explain to me why there is not a fiscal note on this bill?

Steve Canavero:

As I understand it, the Department was engaged with the Governor's Office as the bill was developed, and the \$4 million in each fiscal year accounts for 24 staff and a variety of other supports that we feel is sufficient to carry out the initial phases of the buildup. We have had conversations with districts just for clarification, because as we worked through the bill, we mapped out when aspects of the bill would turn on, and that was the eight-year comment I made in the beginning. In the next biennium, we do not anticipate—I will let the districts speak for themselves—but in our conversations, we have not found where, other than time to support the development of the regulations and provide feedback to the Department as this is built out

Their particular concerns were, when do the school improvement procedures kick in? When does the low-performing measure kick in? When do the additional measures kick in? When do these things happen? For schools, I believe 2027-2028 would be the first school year for probation status, and then for school districts, assuming it takes one year to establish the statewide system of accountability for our districts, 2026-2027 could be when low-performing measures kick in, but then probation does not kick in until 2028-2029. It is pushed out just by the nature of what the Act is attempting to do. We felt like the \$4 million in each fiscal year was sufficient for us to prepare this over the course of this next biennium.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Interesting. I am going to go to members to start the questions, and then I will come back to myself.

Assemblymember Torres-Fossett:

Thank you, Superintendent, for presenting this piece of legislation and for answering some of my questions earlier in the week, but I definitely have more questions that I wanted to make sure are clear for the record.

We do have a responsibility, as good stewards of public funds, to ensure that school districts and schools should be held accountable for supporting our students and for student achievement. My concern right now is, this policy, as drafted, seems very punitive, without

providing the support. I want to know what the Department is doing right now to provide supports to school leaders. There is a lot of language in the bill that would be punitive for administrators who are serving in schools that are underperforming. What supports are provided to districts that are not up to standard, and what would this bill require that then provides those supports?

Steve Canavero:

I will start with the federally required supports that we provide through all of the title funding: ATSI [Additional Targeted Support and Improvement], TSI [Targeted Support and Improvement], CSI [Comprehensive Support and Improvement], and MRO [More Rigorous Options]—all of the federal designations of our schools require us to provide supports on the ground to the schools that are identified. We have a pretty substantial team. I can pull them up if you want to dig into a bit more detail about what that looks like. Having just come back, I am not totally familiar.

I would welcome an opportunity to work with districts on this issue. In my experience, there has not always been an open door to work with districts on supporting their schools or supporting the district in improvement. They have lots of partners to choose from, I understand, but the state tends not to be the first people they call for supports.

I ticked over it fairly quickly in the bill, but there are supports that we contemplate. It is actually one of the driving factors of including the Regional Professional Development Program (RPDP), and we have funding in our fiscal note for the RPDP. Including the concept of the Education Service Center in the bill itself is another. We think there is a capacity gap and a support gap for the very things that you are referencing. We have limitations; the district has limitations, and I have been talking to principals quite a bit around this bill. But even before the last four weeks that I have been here, they need supports, and there is an open area in our state that has yet to really be able to push in on that. Support is sometimes offered by contractors—that is fine. I am sure they are doing a great job, but we need to build our own capacity to help support districts. Maybe the state is not the right entity to be providing the hand-to-hand support they might need; it should be someone else.

Assemblymember Torres-Fossett:

I appreciate that because school districts need support. But what I see here is supports are aligned once a district or a school leader is receiving some type of disciplinary action. What I would like to see, instead, is school leaders receiving that support early on, so they do not receive disciplinary action. That is a concern for me. We in education, in a classroom setting, would definitely provide that support before there is some type of penalty. If we know there is room for concern, we should support.

Additionally, we have had several other legislative conversations about some of the challenges with the current metric system for rating schools. As lawmakers, we believe the current metric system and accountability framework is not equitable. So, it is—Oh, you are in trouble because you did not meet the standards for this inequitable standard performance framework. I think there is still a lot of work to do within that conversation.

I am going to ask a separate question. This relates specifically to the K-3 endorsement or license. Are there other states that have similar K-3 endorsements?

Steve Canavero:

I will ask to see if any of the team knows the answer to that. I believe yes, but maybe I can do a little bit more homework and get back to you.

I totally agree with you in the beforehand supports. We always feel like we come in because the federal rules allow us to then provide supports. I would hope that, maybe, this Act, as a means toward something, can build bridges between the state and the district and the schools, to get them what they need. And it is likely coming from the district with support from the state.

The metrics in the Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) recognize the really strong work around Portrait of a Learner, the Department's Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education, and a lot of conversation around what currently we call the NSPF—in law, it is the statewide system of accountability. This bill is agnostic to what the statewide system of accountability is. It is responsive to whatever has been established as a statewide system of accountability. So, it does not answer the question, but it allows the flexibility for the statewide system of accountability to be updated and to be modified. This bill just references it as it is referenced in statute. Hopefully, that is a little helpful, in terms of how the interplay works.

Assemblymember Torres-Fossett:

In regard to the K-3 endorsement, you said you are going to get back to me with more information about what other states require that. I am concerned, regardless, about the 2027 deadline. We are going to be asking thousands of teachers across the state of Nevada to get another endorsement that they are going to have to go pay for on their own. And they are going to have to take curriculum that does not exist right now, because we do not even know what the guidelines are. They would have one year to get additional coursework that may be provided—it says some of it, depending on what the Commission on Professional Standards in Education decides is going to be required. We are putting a lot of strain on educators to go get this support. I love the idea of supporting the educators in that space. Just, at this time, another endorsement is an additional cost to teachers without the necessary supports they need, and there is just too much in question. We definitely need to review that.

Steve Canavero:

In my testimony, I said there are conversations happening around this. If anybody is wondering where those conversations started, I think we just found out. Thank you for bringing that up. The intention of the bill is to support our educators to be prepared around the science of reading, and to support K-3 and beyond in elementary. It is not to create an additional administrative burden or somehow disincentivize elementary educators from teaching in those grades. That is the intention. If we need to work on that, then we need to work on it.

Assemblymember Anderson:

It has been a long read-through for us, and I greatly appreciate it. I have a lot of questions. We have talked before, so I am sure you are not surprised. I am going to go by page number.

The first one has to do with page 17. In this section, you talk about public schools, but in other sections, you talk about charter schools. Is this accountability for both the traditional public schools which are governed by an elected board of trustees in each county as well as charter schools which might be run by charter management organizations (CMOs)? Or is the bill only for the traditional public schools?

Steve Canavero:

It is for all. Somewhere in my walk-through of the bill, I referenced a specific section where it talks about a whole set of laws related to accountability for charter schools: autoclosure, contract lengths, and sponsor oversight. Yes, they would qualify for the interventions and the supports, but we would not infringe upon a sponsor's right to close an underperforming charter school. There is language in the bill to clarify that. So, "Yes, and" would be the answer.

Assemblymember Anderson:

I appreciate that clarification because, reading it right now, it feels like the traditional public schools can be closed down and the traditional elected officials from a school board can be removed, but a charter schools' CMOs, wherever you fit on the charter school belief system, are not being held accountable in the same way. Could you figure out what section that is and make sure that is clear, because, right now, if they are supposed to be treated the same in this proposal, it does not feel like that.

Steve Canavero:

Going way back to the Governor's intention, it is that students are not in low-performing schools—whether it is a charter school or it is a traditional public school. I will find that section. Keep asking, and I will switch around here.

Assemblymember Anderson:

My other question comes from section 13 and section 14. It is sticking with that whole idea of the school district being run by the elected trustees who, realistically, only have oversight of one person, and that is the superintendent. The way this is being presented is those school board trustees can be basically told you are moot. Congratulations for having an elected position that does not matter. And now, they will be answering to the State Superintendent. So, who, besides the Governor, has oversight of the State Superintendent?

Steve Canavero:

The superintendent of public instruction of Nevada serves at the pleasure of the Governor. If I do not do well enough tonight, I could be gone. That is how it functions. I really appreciate your question because this is an important component around governance, oversight, and the state's interest and how these actually interplay.

The intent here is everything. All options on the table are to ensure that students can achieve, and our teachers and our principals are supported across the public education system. To get to this point, it would take a long road. I mentioned eight years at the beginning. That includes a probationary status where we would have a plan. We would be working, I hope, at the same side of the table to support the district and the superintendent, to improve with that plan. And then, it escalates. I did not want to leave the impression that it goes from 0 to 100 without the steps in between—and there are steps in between. But I can also appreciate the concerns you are raising.

Assemblymember Anderson:

I appreciate what you are saying, especially the period of time you are mentioning, because there is a very strong possibility that a board of trustees can have a complete turnaround based upon the will of the people in that county. That is where elections matter and where we need to trust the voters in this way. When those things happen, will those plans then be reevaluated, or start over again? Is that mentioned? I know it is in one part of this bill. I have no idea what sections it is in now, where we start talking about the different plans. Do those plans have to get reevaluated after every election based upon a change of trustees?

Steve Canavero:

There is no requirement. The bill is silent on that. There are quarterly updates that the board engages in on the improvement plan, so there are transparency components to it. There is more in here. There is quite a bit of reporting. If the board changes and the trustees wish to have a conversation about what the plan's intentions are, that, of course, is the right of the newly elected board. But there is nothing in here that would make a sort of restart switch.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Assemblymember Anderson, I can come back to you.

Assemblymember Mosca:

I will start by saying I align as well with values where we have to make sure that students, no matter where they are from, have the opportunity to attain their dreams. I also have many questions, but I will start just with the high-level ones. I would like to start with sections 3 through 12, which are about the districts. Now, we have a school performance framework, but we currently do not have a district framework. Thinking about all that is now going to have to happen to make sure that all 17 of our districts can be considered in a framework, have you thought about what would happen if all of our districts were below standard? What is the plan for that? We have districts like White Pine that may not have great facilities. We have districts like Pershing that may not have places to partner with on college and career readiness for the College and Career Readiness diploma. How are we going to differentiate a framework for all 17 counties—having them under one framework that has not existed before?

Steve Canavero:

That is a really good question. I could only hypothesize about what the framework might entail, given the need to develop it in consultation with districts, and families, and engage with stakeholders—just as we have with the current star rating system for schools. The bill contemplates each district's framework to be unique, not in the sense of the ingredients that go in, but obviously the measures of the schools that they govern. Let us say aggregate school performance in elementary, aggregate school performance in middle school, aggregate school performance in high school, college and career readiness attainment—those could be the buckets. Then it is an aggregate view of the schools under their governance—that would aggregate at the district level. That could be the simplest version of what could be contemplated as we go through this discussion. We want to keep track of the conversations and any other legislation that passes here because we would want the district's school performance framework to be similar so parents can understand how that is connected to the individual school's performance framework that their son or daughter might attend. That is generally how we envision it working, given there is a process between this and what I just mentioned.

Assemblymember Mosca:

I know from sitting on the Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education—we have been discussing this for over a year and a half and really making sure that we have been talking to stakeholders—whether they are students, parents, or families, because this is going to be a high lift. When we are changing how we are evaluating all of our schools, plus our districts—having the technical assistance to do that—but then explaining it to the community; it makes sense that it is going to take a long time.

My next really big question was on section 29, on page 57, when you started talking about the different interventions that would happen at the school base. I was talking about the district before, and now these are the schools. We are saying they are chronically underperforming. We have talked about this, too, and I appreciate you talking to me in my office. I remember when the achievement school district existed, when we used to actually have this in statute, and then it went away in statute when there was different leadership. How would we incentivize, for instance, a charter takeover, if there are not more resources, or there are not changed conditions? Why would a city or county want to take over if we do not include that as well?

Steve Canavero:

Specific to the question about what would happen if you made the phone call and nobody answered—that is how I heard it. That is one of the reasons why the bill includes five corrective measures in total, or some combination thereof, after the probationary period. If the superintendent issues a request for qualifications or request for interest, that would include charters, that would include cities or counties that might have an interest, and that would include principals and teachers who might have an interest in pursuing an innovation plan. It is only after that, that then the superintendent considers the feedback in order to develop a plan. There is also in the bill some communication and stakeholder engagement as well. I should not have skipped over that; it is important. Taking all that into consideration, if

you did pick up the phone and the city said; we are not interested, or a charter said; we are not interested, then you have a narrower set of corrective measures to deploy. But you still will have a set.

Assemblymember Mosca:

If we are saying the trustees are accountable when a school has not yet been placed under corrective action, if we then put that school under a city or a county, would we say those city councilmen and those county commissioners also have accountability if they do not raise the scores?

Steve Canavero:

They would be accountable for the school. The answer is yes. The bill does not contemplate an additional framework, for that particular instance, for the city or county. But they would be accountable for that school and the school's performance because they ultimately become the school's district.

Assemblymember Backus:

Most of my questions are probably going to deal with the financial aspect of the bill, but I did have one quick question on language in the bill that stood out when you walked us through. It was on page 20, regarding the annual report of accountability that is prepared for each school and charter school. There was language that, as part of the report, each school and charter school would be compared to other schools in the district. But then, the new language that is being added has, ". . . where applicable, with the results of pupils in schools in comparable school districts in other states." In my mind, we always cannot help but go to the level of funding that we do in the state of Nevada. Unfortunately, it is quite low compared to the other states. I do not know where these school districts are going to be pulled from. I look to New York which funds per-pupil education at \$33,000, and we are only at one-third of that. Is this report going to compare our schools to schools that have considerable funding? What was the plan for that part?

Steve Canavero:

My understanding of this particular section is, "comparable" is not just third grade-to-third grade, but is comparable in context, as well as across the various factors that we know influence or have the potential to affect student achievement. Your point is well taken. The Smarter Balanced assessment is what we currently use, and we often look at how we are doing compared to other states that also use the Smarter Balanced assessment. The American College Testing (ACT) is another example; this is one for which we have to add a qualifier. It may not be school funding, but it is a universal offering with ACT. State ACT scores are all over the map, but those states that have a full 100 percent of their students taking the assessment, like Nevada does—we do a comparative on them to understand where we are.

Lastly, there is some really interesting National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) analysis, because all of the nation takes the NAEP. We have 4th and 8th grade, but others do an analysis that looks at similarly situated students. We can understand how we are growing in comparison to how other states with similarly situated students are growing. It does help

us understand a little bit about what this sort of independent view looks like. Are we doing well? Are we outpacing, at least on the NAEP, our 4th grade literacy, but our 8th grade, not? It does give us a bit of information. The intention here is, where there is comparable data in comparable school districts—and that comparison should include factors of situation and factors of "similarly situated" is how the educator researchers call it—that should be considered. It is probably just not written because it is long.

Assemblymember Backus:

It is probably a difference between legalese and your level of expertise in education.

Now, for the funding aspect. It did not seem there was a section that would actually fund section 25 that pertains to the Empowering Parents Account to support literacy intervention grants. I thought, well, maybe it fell under section 68, but now I understand that \$8 million is going to be needed for the Department of Education to fund the structure and to get it up and going. The language in the bill references that this money would come from the State Education Fund. In the State Education Fund, we have our Education Savings Account, and we have the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan. Just where are these extra million dollars or more that are being allocated in this bill coming from, when there are no appropriations?

Steve Canavero:

I may have to phone a friend on this one, Megan Peterson, our Deputy Superintendent for Student Investment, if that is acceptable, Chair. May we follow up with you on an answer to that question?

Assemblymember Backus:

That would be great. I can throw my other question out there, too, because it is along the same lines. Once this account is set up, we need to know the mechanism more specifically—the mechanism that is going to be transferring funds. We need to know the source of the funds that are going into this new account, and then once the account is funded, how the funds are going to be distributed amongst our 17 school districts.

Steve Canavero:

For clarification, your question is referencing the Empowering Parents Account?

Assemblymember Backus:

Yes, it is. All of it is under section 25.

Steve Canavero:

There is some language around a proportional award to districts based upon the number of students who qualify. I trust my instincts here, but I want to find it. The distribution of it is prioritized by income, but I think you are referencing the transfer of funds to the district. We will find it, if you want to ask the next stumper.

Assemblymember Backus:

That was my last question, Chair, with respect to that section.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I am going to jump in as long as we are on fiscal matters. Can you tell us whether the seven members who are appointed to the Education Service Center will receive a stipend for the work they will do? Are they employees? I did not see anything in the bill on how the service center is funded. What is the thought process there?

Steve Canavero:

I believe the board serves without compensation. Yes, it is in section 61, subsection 4, paragraph (a) on page 108. That may not be your specific question though.

How it is funded is there are a number of funding streams this Education Service Center would be eligible for. Over the long haul it could be eligible for federal funding. It could be eligible for receiving funding from the state if they take on certain responsibilities pursuant to this Act. They could be funded to support the state to do specific work. They can apply for grants, accept available gifts, appropriations, or donations. It is starting with no funding, so there is no appropriation within the bill to start it.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

There is no appropriation in the bill as drafted—so, I did not miss it. When you say they could be funded by the state, would that mean funded through NDE, with NDE receiving that money from the General Fund during the legislative session to fund this in future biennia?

Steve Canavero:

That is certainly a path in the future that could be taken, yes. In the interim, the Department could look at the resources that we have—it could even be federal school improvement resources that we have, and we could then engage with the Education Service Center (ESC) as a partner through an interlocal agreement for the services that they would provide in support of school districts. That would be a really quick way to have it do some work. But what you mention could be a long-term path for sustainability. It is not meant to compete with RPDs—I want to be clear—that is not the intention here. The intention is for a federally recognized center, very specific in the lane that it occupies across the state, to support school and district performance improvement.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

So, not during this legislative session, but in future legislative sessions, this body could expect, if this bill were to pass in the form that it is written, that NDE would be coming to this body asking for additional funding for this—or NDE would be taking money from existing programs to fund this.

Steve Canavero:

Because we have this biennium that the Department—as it stands up the work, engages with the districts, should this pass—we would then come with a budget bill that is reflective of the type of work that needs to occur in the next biennium. Whether or not there would be a request for funding for the ESC, I cannot say; I do not know. I do not think funding of the

ESC from the state would be reducing a particular service. I think we would be asking the ESC to do a service that we felt the ESC could do, perhaps better or more nimbly, than the Department could. Hopefully, that helps.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

It does help in explaining the thought pattern. I am going to go now to the RISE Accounts. What would the mechanism be for funding the RISE Accounts in future biennia?

Steve Canavero:

An appropriation by the Legislature.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I do not know if you have seen it, but the Legislature is hurting for money. To be fiscally responsible and not wanting to move things that are going to impact future legislators who will be sitting in these seats—what do you anticipate that appropriation ask would be for future legislative bodies?

Steve Canavero:

I do not have an estimate or a number for you at this time.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

It looks like the fiscal impact for the RISE Accounts would be approximately \$850,000 for the 2025-2027 biennium, through the State Treasurer's Office. Is that correct?

Steve Canavero:

That is correct. It is in section 66, on page 114, for carrying out the establishment of the program—\$850,000 to the State Treasurer.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

So, that money would have to be appropriated in this legislative session by this body to stand up this RISE Account program.

Steve Canavero:

That is correct.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I have two more questions, then we will go back to other members. Regarding transportation, there are changes for the charter school transportation. How would including charter schools in the transportation funding tier impact the statewide base per-pupil amount for future biennia?

Steve Canavero:

I hate to say it depends, but that appears to be the answer about the implementation of transportation for the charter schools and the impact on future biennia. That is the essence of the question, correct?

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

By that answer, I would assume you have not performed any analysis on the anticipated cost to implement the transportation program, especially for the open enrollment and the expanded achievement options for local education agencies.

Steve Canavero:

Okay, I see where you are going. We have not, primarily because that is a next-biennium conversation. We anticipate, during this biennium, we would have a better understanding of the schools that would qualify and what the impact of the open enrollment system would be, and work with the districts to understand a number that they would anticipate in terms of the open seats or free space. Then, we would have a better understanding of the fiscal impact that the district would incur based upon the transportation. Does that make sense?

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

No, it does not, because it may be a next-biennium issue, but it is a this-biennium conversation we have to have so we are not putting the Legislature at a fiscal cliff that we are going to be in should we not be in a position where we can afford this. I am wanting to know and expecting some analysis of what the future costs would be that this body would have to deal with, and you, as NDE, will be requesting in your future budgets. It is very difficult for me, as a fiscal leader in this body, to say yes to this, not knowing what those dollars are—committing us or future legislative bodies to pay for something that has not even been analyzed. We do not know what we are getting ourselves into. Does that make sense?

Steve Canavero:

Loud and clear. We will note that.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I have a few more questions, but we will go to the next member.

Assemblymember Yeager:

I have a number of questions. Building off of what the Chair asked—philosophically, why do we have a bill with all of this in here, when a lot of this will not even be enacted for, you said, eight years? We are asking fiscal questions, and we are hearing about programs that we want to stand up, but we do not know what the funding is going to be because we do not know what the demand is going to be. Why is it not smaller bites to take, biennium-by-biennium, rather than asking us to put all of this into statute, when most of it is not even going to go into effect for almost a decade? I do not know how involved you were in the construction of this bill, but can you speak to that at all? How is it fair for us to make these determinations when much of what is going to happen is going to depend on things in the future and who is sitting in these seats then?

Steve Canavero:

My understanding is clear. The Governor's intent is in serving students in low-performing schools and ensuring that our statewide performance increases, and there is accountability throughout the system to do that. I believe it starts somewhere, and that is where the Governor's bill starts: to build out a system for the state to do the type of work that we feel is necessary in order to support and then lift improvement across the state. That is what I have.

Assemblymember Yeager:

One, I do want to acknowledge that the Governor came in here and he thanked us for our collaboration in the historic funding. I appreciate that because it was a collaborative effort. I do not believe, however, that this bill was a collaborative effort. There were working groups working for months and months and months, and not a single legislator was ever asked to be a part of those working groups. I am not blaming you for that, but my frustration there is, we were faced with this gigantic bill two weeks ago in session, and I sense, from looking at the audience members, they are wondering when they will get to testify on this bill. They have been sitting here patiently. I feel a lot of this could have been worked out if legislators had been part of the working groups—to get some of these questions answered or provide suggestions, especially considering how many educators are on this Committee. That is a frustration of mine, because we have two weeks to go in session, and this is a gigantic policy-shift kind of bill.

I have another philosophical question and then a number of technical questions. The philosophical question is one touched upon by Assemblymember Backus. We all want accountability. We talked about that last session. We are talking about it today. I do not think you are going to find a person up here who does not want accountability—but how do we evaluate accountability in the funding structure we have here in the state? Where does it translate into accountability, the fact that Nevada is still number 48 or 49 in the country in terms of per-pupil funding? How does that factor into all of this?

Steve Canavero:

The perspective the Department holds is, in many ways, it is how the funds are used in addition to how much funding is available. An iteration of the bill is a means toward something. We would be able to come together to figure out how to have the most efficient operations possible. We leverage the state Department of Education resources, we leverage the district's resources, and we leverage the school's resources to provide the types of supports that are necessary, to the extent they exist. That is the reality, at least for us, that we have to live in.

Assemblymember Yeager:

Does anything in this bill allow the Department of Education, the superintendent of public instruction, to remove a superintendent of a school district? Or is that authority not granted in this bill?

Steve Canavero:

Yes, it does. The bill does have a provision to remove a superintendent.

Assemblymember Yeager:

That would, presumably, be without the consent of an elected board of trustees who would have been the ones who had hired that superintendent. That is how I read the bill. I have to be honest; this is a gigantic bill, and I did my best to get through it. I know there are a lot of mechanisms to get to that are in the bill, but ultimately, that would be something that would be done without the consent or approval of the elected board of trustees. Could you confirm that decision?

Steve Canavero:

There is the authority to remove a district superintendent or key personnel in the bill, and there have been some discussions about adopting language that holds the district trustees harmless for the decision that is being made. I think there is another bill that has similar language in it.

Assemblymember Yeager:

One of the concerns I have is the capacity of the Department of Education to do any of this. I say that respectfully, but with the federal Department of Education seemingly going away and we not knowing how that is going to work, how in the world is the state Department of Education going to have the capacity to take over an entire school district or individual schools?

And, related to that question, section 61 of the bill, which we talked about a little bit, creates the Education Service Center. Is that the entity that would do some of this work? I am trying to figure out why we are creating yet another level of government to get involved in the education system when—I am not saying I agree with this—nationally, the conversation has been we should have less government and more local control. What I see in section 61 is another state agency that somehow fits with NDE but maybe does not. Could you clarify how you think that would work?

Steve Canavero:

Capacity is a key consideration as you read through this bill, and you look at the provisions that we have to think about. We have contemplated that, in these next two years, with the fiscal note to stand up, support the build out the infrastructure—but the ESC is independent. They are certainly connected to the Department in the sense they are obligated to be responsive to the initiatives of the state and, specifically, to sections within this Act. But they would be independent from the Department of Education, and, ideally, be the capacity-building arm the Department could lean on to provide those capacity services. So, your read of it, even if quick, is correct.

Assemblymember Yeager:

What is an innovation school like? What is that, in your mind? It says someone can create an innovation school. Remember, the last time this Legislature was presented with something called "Innovation Zones" back in 2019 it did not go over very well.

Steve Canavero:

I have been referring to it as the from-us-for-us school. It engages with the educators at the school site if they want to pursue innovation status. The school remains within the school district; they have the authority to have flexibility on things like budgeting, curriculum, and professional development. They have more control over what is happening within the constraints of their school, principal, and teachers. They could waive or request to waive particular policy of the district. They can say, hey, this is getting in our way, and we want to waive some policies. Essentially another view is, if it is for and from the educators at the school, it stays within the district; it is also an opportunity to try out different or new approaches to meet the needs of the community and the students. Is that helpful?

Assemblymember Yeager:

It is. I have a lot of questions, and I can ask some of them offline. I know other members have questions. Chair, if I could ask one last question—this is one that is important to me.

I was not really clear from reading the bill or from hearing the presentation how this works: I am not going to go through the whole structure, but there are mechanisms in this bill where students can basically leave a school that is underperforming or chronically underperforming. Then we have the RISE Accounts. My question is, if a student leaves and goes to a private school, does the state per-pupil funding follow that student into a private school, or does it work some other way?

Steve Canavero:

The funding does not follow the student to the private school through the RISE Account. It is a separate and distinct appropriation. It has to be within the constraints of the *Nevada Constitution* and the separate appropriation to the Nevada Integrity in Academic Funding Program account. The 90 percent of per-pupil is just mentioned as the ceiling for how much a particular RISE Account could be used to then pay for, in that particular case, tuition at a private school. So, it is separate from the per-pupil funding.

Assemblymember Yeager:

I was not in the building back in 2015 when the Legislature enacted the Education Savings Account, also known as a voucher program. That was challenged and, basically, that was never funded. This looks a little bit like that to me. We are establishing an account that could be used, potentially, to fund private schools; we are asking for state money to be in there. Those mechanisms are in the bill, but if they are not funded—and this would be a General Fund appropriation, not a tax credit like the so-called Opportunity Scholarships—if there is no funding in there, a student could still go to a private school if he could afford it on his own, but he functionally would not be able to take advantage of the RISE Account if there is no funding there.

Steve Canavero:

That is correct. The intention in the bill and the design of the Nevada Integrity in Academic Funding Program account is to be responsive to *Lopez v. Schwartz* and the fallout from there.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

For the Excellence in Education Account, how did the Governor determine that \$30 million was the appropriate maximum balance in the account, and why the maximum should increase by the rate of inflation each fiscal year?

Steve Canavero:

This is where some modeling did take place with teachers and administrators, using the Nevada Educator Performance Framework data. It is not perfect, but there was some modeling. We used average salary, so again, not perfect. We may have rounded up along the way to ensure the ceiling was reasonable enough to meet the needs of districts that opt in.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Given the fact that this is the money committee, we have approved transferring approximately \$242 million from the Education Stabilization Account to the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan to support K-12 education through FY 2025 and in the 2025-2027 biennium. What is the probability that the Education Stabilization Account will exceed that 20 percent cap in order to even put money into that account? I believe that is where the money will be coming from—once funds exceed that cap during the 2025-2027 biennium or in future biennium. Because, during the interim, NDE came to the Interim Finance Committee (IFC) once or twice, and then again during this legislative session, for money from that account to balance your books.

Steve Canavero:

It does not have to exceed the 20 percent for it to be actionable or accessed for the Excellence in Education Account. There is also a provision around the ending fund balance for districts and charter schools as well. When we worked through this, we believed that in FY 2027 it could be utilized, and it will likely be funded with interest, because interest can transfer over to the Excellence in Education Account. I am a non-fiscal person, so I apologize if I am way over my skis here.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Right now, those ending fund balances flow into the current account, and NDE has had to come to this legislative body to get money to continue the programming and funding to balance your books and twice has taken a loan from that account and paid that money back. Now you are saying that money would not flow into the account. That money would not be there if NDE needs it for the current programming, because you would take that money to put into this new Excellence in Education Account? If I am not understanding it correctly, please educate me; but that is how I understand it.

Steve Canavero:

Could you ask the question one more time, Madam Chair? I am not being thick; I am just trying to understand the question.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

You said something about the ending fund balances at the schools. That money flows into the account currently. If you are going to take those dollars that are currently going into the account from where NDE has come to us during legislative sessions and IFCs for the Education Stabilization Account that was set up to help NDE make sure we are able to not have to lower the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan—if the money does not go there, and if we do not make it to the 20 percent cap, you would still be able to access dollars from that, taking the balance even further down, to fund this new account. How is that going to impact the current program that we have—that account from where you are currently coming to this body and asking for money and loans to make NDE whole?

Steve Canavero:

The only available funding would be the interest on the Stabilization Account; it would not be the ending fund balances—just a quick clarification there. I will tap in Deputy Superintendent Peterson to see if she can help address some of the other questions you are asking.

Megan Peterson, Deputy Superintendent for Student Investment, Department of Education:

I want to start at a high level and explain the overall concept and the mechanism, and how they trigger, and then how the account is funded, which I think is the ultimate question.

Initially, the intent is to look at the value of the Stabilization Account, in combination with the reserves at school districts and charter schools. If the combined of those equals 20 percent of the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan allocations, then we would look at triggering the mechanism to initiate the Excellence in Education Account. At that point, because the combined value of all of those sources is 20 percent, instead of transferring from the Stabilization Account, we would instead transfer any interest earned in excess—due either to higher-than-projected revenues or less-than-projected enrollment savings. That interest would instead go into the Excellence in Education Account, funding that until the account reaches the \$30 million, at which point, then, that is available to use to provide funding for the incentives. I hope that clarifies a little bit.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

It explains the thought pattern of how you got to this. I may not be in agreement that that would be the best use of those funds.

Assemblymember Backus:

I want to get a point of clarification with the statutory language as you just explained it. Section 17, subsection 4, paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) provide a priority order of that funding. If, at present, we have not reached the limits set forth by statute from last legislative session where we established a new cap for the Education Stabilization Account, if we do not meet those provisions under paragraphs (a) and (b), you would not get to (c); and paragraph (c)

provides that any of the interest in the Education Stabilization Account would roll into that account. Am I understanding that the policy you are implementing provides that we will not touch that unless we fully fund our Educational Stabilization Account first?

Megan Peterson:

Our understanding is that once the mechanism is triggered—because the 20 percent of the combined Stabilization Account and reserve of the school districts is met—then we would begin filling the Excellence in Education Account through tiers (a), (b), and (c). And then, once the Excellence in Education account is fully funded at the \$30 million, then anything left over from those tiers would begin transferring back to the Stabilization Account.

Assemblymember Watts:

I am really interested in this topic as well. I have confusion because my reading is the same as my colleague's. There is an order that we would go through of funding this account and interest is at the bottom of the order. You have indicated that your current projections show we would be in a place where some amount of interest may enter this account in FY 2027. It would be helpful if you could show us the math on that, so that we can see exactly what the estimates are of the combination of the Education Stabilization Account and the reserves, the balances for the school districts and charter schools, and then exactly what money would be flowing over and how much. That is a comment that, hopefully, would help all of us understand your thought process, and help us see if that aligns with our interpretation of the statutory language.

The questions that I want to ask are about the low-performing schools. First of all, do you have an estimate, based on these criteria, how many of our schools in the state would currently be designated as low-performing?

Steve Canavero:

Using past data, about 53 percent would be designated the one- or two-star, with the English and mathematics below 20th-percentile among high school graduates. Under the provisions about 53 percent are currently federal designations. There are about 180 schools in the federal designations, so approximately 70 additional—not that it is a one-to-one overlap, but in terms of the numbers of schools that would be worked with.

Assemblymember Watts:

If you could follow up, that would be helpful, but it is a significant number; it sounds like the majority of our schools.

Could you tell me a bit more about the criteria in section 7, subsection 1, paragraph (b), about the pupils demonstrating proficiency in English language arts and mathematics in the bottom 20th percentile of statewide performance metrics? You may be more familiar with this than I am, since this is not an area I am constantly engaged in, but my reading is that essentially—and I know we are far from where we want to be—essentially, the bottom 20 percent of performance at all times of schools would always fall within the low-performing designation. If I do not understand that properly, can you help explain that item to me a bit better?

Steve Canavero:

Certainly. On page 17, "The pupils enrolled in the public school demonstrate proficiency in English language arts and mathematics in the bottom 20th percentile of statewide performance metrics . . ." The bottom 20th percentile would be the mark. That is agnostic to the number of students; that is the mark. The students who fall within that bottom 20th percentile of the distribution of scores would be the students who would be identified with this paragraph (b); so, it is not always a one-to-one with the 20th percentile and 20 percent of kids.

Assemblymember Watts:

How does that relate to the schools? At what density of students in a school triggers the school to be listed as underperforming? Does that make sense? My understanding is you are setting this 20th percentile benchmark, and you are looking at the students who fall into that, but in a school you will have some students who are above that or below that. At what point does that trigger for the school?

Steve Canavero:

It is applied at the school. It is determined at the state level. It is the entire state distribution, but it is applied to a particular school site—so it is their students' performance against that statewide 20th percentile mark.

Assemblymember Watts:

Okay, thank you. This is a quick check of my understanding: If, throughout the process, we reach the point where there are various interventions in the schools designated as persistently underperforming—it seems there are a lot of different options, one of which is this innovation school. I am still trying to understand how it is different than a charter. Another also is conversion to a charter. My understanding is that a charter could be under the district or it could be under the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA).

Then, you indicated they will have both the same accountability measures as all of the other schools as well as what already exists on charters, so it is possible that, if they do not improve, that a charter school that was once a public school could be closed. But it also notes that potentially, if there is improvement, the original governance could be reinstated. Would that mean that a charter school would then be reverted back into a traditional public school? If my understanding of all those options is correct—has that been done? It seems there would be a lot of logistics and moving pieces in taking a public school, transitioning it into a charter school, and then, potentially, transitioning it back.

Steve Canavero:

I think there are three questions in that one question.

In terms of charter sponsorship, it is any sponsor approved by the Department. That could include a school district; it could include the SPCSA; and cities and counties. Folks, I have to apologize; I am not totally up to date on the cities and counties. That is new since I have left.

The easiest way to differentiate between innovation versus charter is governance. The innovation is a district school; a charter school has its own board—it is its own independent school. That might be helpful. I could see how they seem the same, because they both should enjoy some flexibilities otherwise not available to noncharter or noninnovation public schools.

The charter-back-to-public is a hypothetical scenario, but we could play it out a bit. Let me say this first: If the charter school is not succeeding, you are right, it would be subject to these provisions, period. And, to answer Assemblymember Anderson's question: section 29, subsection 10, on page 60 is where the interventions we are talking about here are a little bit unique in the charter space, because the sponsor may be pursuing closure of a charter school, and there is nothing in this space that would impair or infringe upon that charter sponsor's right to execute the contract in a way that makes sense to them. So, if a charter school was converted, but the charter school was not successful, then any one of these provisions would apply. Or, if it was successful, they could make a determination as to whether returning to governance makes sense for the community and, obviously, have the community have a voice in that.

Assemblymember Watts:

I understand this. I appreciate the idea of accountability, but I also then wonder, if there is a conversion to a charter, and the charter does not succeed, now the school is closed—where we once had a public school, now we have no school. I wonder what the potential implications of that can be.

Going back to the fiscal question: A majority of schools would fit into this low-performing framework that would require significant intervention from the Department. You have a rundown of what this \$4 million appropriation would cover. We do not have that, because we do not have a fiscal note on the bill that lays out what the various staffing needs are to implement it. To put a point on it, you are saying it would only take \$4 million a year to manage the majority of schools in the state that would be designated as low-performing under this framework. I go back to the question of capacity—the capacity the Department would have to undertake everything that is laid out for these low-performing schools, given the numbers you provided to me initially.

Steve Canavero:

We believe the \$4 million in each fiscal year of this biennium is sufficient to start and stand up and build out the programming. There are a series of events in time, supports, and alignment that occurs well before we enter into the corrective measures. Our goal would be to utilize the time that it takes and the staffing that it takes to stand up and build the programming, to then follow on in the next biennium and help support the school improvement planning process for the schools that are identified. Our hope is that, working with the district in collaboration, we can support these schools with their improvement plans.

That is unique from what we currently already require. There would definitely be different components that we would then be able to work, and they would work themselves out of probation, or the improvement would occur. That would be in the next biennium, where we would be supporting low-performing schools on probation.

Assemblymember Watts:

Effects on future biennia is also covered in a fiscal note, so we could see what the effect of that ramp-up would be on your agency moving forward. I just wanted to put that on the record. I have questions on other areas as well, but I know many other members do as well, so I will pause at this time.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I have a few fiscal questions, but I know we have a number of members in line to ask questions, so I will come back to those if the members do not ask them.

Assemblymember Brown-May:

I am going to jump back to section 53, subsection 1, paragraph (d), on page 98, where we talk about qualifying for that endorsement to teach K-3 in each field of specialization. Paragraph (d)(2) identifies having that endorsement for pupils with disabilities, and paragraph (d)(4) mentions trauma-informed practices. How does this framework address the specialized needs of our students with disabilities? Is there any contemplation around how we are collecting that data with regard to their performance and integration in the educational system? In previous times, the deaf and hard-of-hearing community, in particular, has come forward and requested an assessment from the Department of Education to look at the needs for our deaf students. Could you speak to that?

Steve Canavero:

Assemblymember, are we on page 98, and are we under the provisions related to the license qualifications and then effective methods for teaching those standards, but also considering differentiating for students with disabilities?

Assemblymember Brown-May:

That is correct. I can see we are contemplating parts of that, and I am curious how we are carrying that all the way through to student performance.

Steve Canavero:

When we establish standards, even when we establish at the state level, model curriculum—we do not adopt curriculum; we just establish standards. We may establish guidelines and instructional strategies that are effective. Those are guidance to the districts and guidance to the schools. Depending upon how they interact with that guidance would dictate, really, what the experience for a student with disabilities would be in a classroom, with a teacher who would otherwise be trained on this. Is that helpful? I do not mean to put the series of steps in between all this, but the Department does not go directly into a school and evaluate the pedagogy or evaluate teachers in schools.

Assemblymember Brown-May:

I appreciate that. But I am curious to know how we are evaluating that student's performance framework in this methodology, as we are looking for effective education.

Steve Canavero:

I appreciate the follow up and clarification. Elementary students with disabilities—unless they are on an individualized education program (IEP) where they are on a different assessment system—would take the literacy assessments in early learning, and we would then get that information. That is part of the student performance we currently measure on the statewide system of accountability. It is currently a component within a special population that stands out from the other special populations that are included within the accountability system. In addition to the standard 3rd grade state assessment battery, there is our public accountability reporting that includes the performance on 3rd grade literacy assessments that the districts deploy statewide. There certainly are a number of points along the way that we keep track of for the students with disabilities and their performance. Especially in the elementary grades, where we have a couple of different assessments: the 3rd grade literacy, and then 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th grade assessments as well. Is that helpful?

Assemblymember Brown-May:

I am going to be very honest with you. Yes, maybe. It may be helpful. The last count I had was 16,000 students who have IEPs in the state of Nevada at a specific grade level. It is very important, though, that we make sure the performance framework we are putting into place, with regard to educating all of our students, includes our students with disabilities, and that we are still expecting them to progress, and that we are building the systems that are also helpful for them, as well as the teachers who are going to be in those classrooms.

Specifically, the deaf and hard-of-hearing community has asked repeatedly for us to look at the specialized needs of those deaf and hard-of-hearing students—for them to be able to be integrated and given specialized services. In this framework, we are also including specialized endorsements for teachers who receive training in American Sign Language, which is really good, but my real question is how are we tracking the performance of those students, to be able to meet the expectations, so they can graduate on time?

Steve Canavero:

I do not want to give the impression that we do not monitor students with disabilities. Absolutely, they are part of the framework. They are part of the points-earning framework for every school. There are expectations they have to meet in terms of their performance; there is a standard. In particular, a school that has a significant gap between the students with disabilities and the general student population would be identified for additional supports. They would be part of the targeted supports and assistance interventions we have at the state level, if there is a significant gap in achievement.

Assemblymember Brown-May:

I do appreciate that. As we continue to build out this performance framework, it is essential for us to include students with disabilities in that performance, and what the expectation is for them.

I want to go back to section 1, subsection 1, paragraph (a), at page 8; it talks about ensuring that all reports serve a meaningful purpose in supporting educational outcomes; then paragraph (c) mentions data concerning the educational achievement of pupils; and then subsection 2, paragraph (c), proposes an alternative report. With all of the changes that are happening at the federal level with regard to the Department of Education and what the expectations are for states to manage, who is going to identify what reports are redundant? What do we value as important for reporting? I am coming at this from a student with disabilities framework, because those numbers are small, and that population was forgotten about for many years. We did not even begin to address this within federal legislation until the 1980s, and I want to make sure that we, Nevada, do not go backwards and find those reports to be redundant or unnecessary.

Steve Canavero:

That is a very insightful question. The intent of this section is for teachers and principals—those who are oftentimes most directly affected by the reporting—to have agency and a channel to be seriously heard, in order for us to reduce the burden on them. That is the intent. It will go all the way up to the superintendent of public instruction. There are safeguards in here that serve your purpose for transparency and for performance. There are safeguards here to ensure it is not just, hey, all the reporting is gone in a world where the infrastructure and the structure we have built are largely responsive to federal reporting, as well as state—if the federal reporting is somehow turned down or turned off. That would be a conversation about our priorities as a state. What are our priorities? I have yet to hear anyone say that our priorities are not to ensure that every group of students, whether it is students with disabilities or students in major racial and ethnic groups, are not identified and worked with to ensure they have the appropriate targets and the high expectations of all of our other students across the state.

Assemblymember Brown-May:

Thank you for your comments. I do believe that you believe that, and I appreciate that. I can tell you, the reality for many of the parents and families of students who have profound needs is, they do not experience that in their daily activity. I hope, as a state, we continue to grow in that direction.

Assemblymember O'Neill:

This is my fourth term in the Legislature; I served in 2015. We have had various programs to improve our education system in Nevada. I have heard, over and over again, give it more money. Last session, we added \$2 billion—the Governor did. Unfortunately, we are still towards the bottom of the list. I am asking a more generalized question. What the Governor

is proposing in this bill, A.B. 584, how does it reimagine . . . Why can I put my faith in it—that the results will be different than what we, unfortunately, have experienced in the past? What is different?

Steve Canavero:

In my experience and opinion, one of the largest drivers within the Governor's Act that is promising for the future of education in our state is the alignment in the interest between the state, the districts, and the schools. Historically, it has always been: schools are accountable, schools are accountable, schools are accountable. And, oftentimes, in conversations with principals and teachers at those schools over the years, they say, hey, we are fine with being held accountable, but we have very little flexibility or very little authority over our particular school site.

The reason why I am hopeful—and it goes back to my opening comments—is we can be on the same side of the table together, fighting for higher achievement for our kids and our communities, and working together to try to solve those problems, rather than fighting against each other about why that school is on the list or not on the list, or you cannot come in and provide supports, or they should not be on your list. Maybe, having the districts accountable, the boards of trustees and the superintendents will see more conversations about student achievement at board meetings, more questions about how funds are being allocated, and what the value of those allocations is. Maybe we will see deeper conversations about integrating services at the local level. Maybe ask the state—I love this—ask the state, ask the Governor's cabinet: How do we bring the Department of Health and Human Services and other state entities to work with our local health departments to provide additional supports at schools where we know they are needed but we do not have the funding to do it?

Leveraging each other's strengths and playing to each other's strengths to try to build a system that is higher-performing and meets the needs of our students and the communities, would be my hope, but I do not think that is far off from the actual language of the bill. It does not prescribe a program necessarily. There are science of reading provisions in the back around literacy, which I think are smart and wise, but there is really nothing in here that says you have to implement this for 10 minutes, and you have to do this for 14 minutes. It is saying you are responsible for outcomes for your students, and we are going to hold you responsible for your outcomes for your students, and let us align our systems to try to make it work. That is my response to your question.

Assemblymember O'Neill:

I appreciate that. I have to say, you used the word hope many times. I have hope for our education system, but—if you do not mind—hope without a plan is just a four-letter word. I hear a plan. What we have here is hope with a plan, and I really appreciate you bringing in, as you were just saying, the other agencies and other departments we have within the state to support our education system, which I have not heard before.

Assemblymember Anderson:

Section 7, subsection 3, paragraph (c), on page 18 mentions an improvement plan for a school site and/or possibly for a district. Could those performance plans include smaller class sizes and caseloads?

Steve Canavero:

Within unknown constraints that I just do not know about . . . This is specific for a school that is in probation, correct? Yes. Other than the provisions of notwithstanding within the law around student achievement, the strategies the school deploys to get there, we feel, would be a conversation and dialogue with the district and the school, because we imagine there would probably be budget concerns or other constraints that the school is operating in that we would need to navigate. I do not think it is contemplated that the plan would just take into consideration those provisions that are listed.

Assemblymember Anderson:

We are both in education. We are both watching what is happening with our university and college graduations, and who is graduating from the college of education. We do not have as many people going into education right now. Let us just be realistic about it. It is the best profession at times, but right now, it is truly the best profession, when you get to talk with the students who are so excited to be graduating.

Over my 28 years of teaching, this really is the first year where I talked to some students and said, hey, you are going to be a great teacher—and out of about 12 kids whom I said that to, not even 3 have said they would be going into education. We have a huge decrease in the number of people going into education. Is that even part of this plan, because we need to start really addressing the larger issue, the fact that our class sizes, as mentioned by the Speaker, are huge.

Steve Canavero:

It is not specifically mentioned in this particular bill, other than there are provisions by which a school in a district can work to modify the principal-supervisor ratios, et cetera. But a shout out to Senate Bill 81 helping with all of the work that you all have invested in over the last 10 or 15 years to support the various scholarship and stipend programs that are available—Teach Nevada Scholarship—to try to encourage students to go into the teaching profession. All of that exists to try to encourage students; you all have funded it. That is why I mentioned it is not just specifically in here. I do not want to say nobody cares about it; you all care about it. We care about it. It is just not specifically in the scope of this bill.

Assemblymember Anderson:

It would be nice if it was because that is one of the biggest things. The other thing this brings up is something I do like in this bill: Section 50 deals with coaching for probationary teachers. That is an excellent idea. Is the idea that this coach would continue to also teach at the same time? Or is the idea that this coach for probationary teachers would be without a classroom?

Steve Canavero:

I need to backtrack a little bit. We just got done talking about the Excellence in Education Account and other provisions to try to keep and retain our teachers and reward them. So, I do not want to dismiss that in the bill. I apologize; I was so focused on the supply that I missed the idea around retaining our professionals in the program. The intent here is for the support to be provided. There is flexibility within the district and the school contexts to make the determinations that you are suggesting; the bill does not go into that level of detail.

Assemblymember Anderson:

We all know the stats right now, of how many individuals are leaving the profession within the first three years. Actually, that is one more item I would like to bring up. You mentioned teachers often, which I appreciate, but we have many other education licensed personnel. Are you using that idea of teachers the same as counselors? Our counselors in our state are looking at 450 to 500 students to one counselor. When you mention teachers, are you also thinking of our other licensed education personnel, whether that is a counselor, speech language pathologist, et cetera?

Steve Canavero:

I do generally refer to the licensed professionals, generally speaking, as teachers. If I went down the list every time, we would be here for longer.

Assemblymember Anderson:

We would. I feel bad about saying et cetera. I have one last question. In section 35, subsection 5, paragraph (a) on page 71, you bring up, for innovation schools—it is not a simple majority, as is what is usually necessary for a contract. Instead, you are changing it to 75 percent of all staff members. That would be not just the other licensed education personnel, but it would also be our education support professionals and anyone who is employed by the school, if I am understanding that correctly. Can you please explain why it is 75 percent, which is a large change from what our current practice is?

Steve Canavero:

It was brought up to me two days ago that the standard in the bill is higher than the typical standard, and I asked for a meeting to discuss exactly what the standard should be. The intention here is that they have a voice, and their voice is appropriate, and if there is a standard, then we would insert that here.

Assemblymember Torres-Fossett:

Thank you for continuing to answer all of our questions on this bill. It is important for the public to know, though. We are not looking at a bill that is just a couple of pages long. We are, right now, discussing a 115-page bill that we have only had for about a week at this point. There are so many different parts in this bill. This is a bill that would generally be several pieces of legislation, so it is important that we have a record and why we have so many questions on this policy before us today.

My question pertains to the Empowering Parents funding in section 26 of the bill. My understanding, from my conversations with districts, is this is quite a big administrative load on districts and schools. The ideal would be subgrants would be created. Then districts would also need personnel. There are no fiscal notes yet from districts, and I would like to see those before we move forward with any piece of policy like this. The bill would require the districts to administer these grants to families within their community.

In my conversations earlier this session, I was told that this bill is to engage families. I am going to call that blasphemous, because as an educator, I know that empowering families and engaging families means engaging them on my campus. As I understand it, the purpose of this bill actually is not family engagement—it is literacy, but I do not see anything in here where we are funding professional development for literacy, and that is a concern of mine.

In section 58, on page 102 of this bill, there is the idea that all of the schools would provide professional development for teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators on the science of reading. I have also spoken to districts, principals, and school leaders, and they do not have the capacity to do that. We are creating a professional development requirement, which is going to be a checked box, without providing the support. In the past, what has NDE done to provide enriching science of reading professional development? Because, if that is the direction we want to go—I understand NDE has done some stuff in the past—could you address some of what has been done previously to actually support literacy?

Steve Canavero:

In our fiscal note we have funding available for that professional development for the reinforcement of science in reading, because I know a lot of folks are already working there. My understanding is the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, University of Nevada, Reno, and Nevada State University already embed that in their teacher prep programs, but we do have some funding available in the fiscal note to work with the RPDPs to then provide the literacy supports and training to districts.

Assemblymember Torres-Fossett:

If we want to provide high-quality science of reading professional development, that is not a two-hour professional development training that can be provided on an in-service day. My conversations with any elementary school leader have suggested that a comprehensive science of reading instruction is at least 20 hours of professional development. So, I do not understand how we work that in and require that all schools provide it annually. That does not seem realistic. I would like to have further conversation about what actually makes sense, as far as that professional development, to make sure teachers actually have the skills and do not feel they have to provide instruction on something they are not comfortable with.

I have another question in regard to the innovation schools and conversions to charters. In the legislation as drafted, if a school was taken over, you could have that school converted to a charter innovation school. There is nothing in the bill guaranteeing that those students continue to be students from that community. With public charter schools, as the statute requires right now, they do have to apply and participate in a lottery. I am a little concerned

that this could create a scenario where you are actually pushing kids out of their neighborhood school into other schools, and then families would have to reapply. I do not think that is the intent, but that is how this legislation stands right now. That is a huge equity concern.

Steve Canavero:

That is not the intention of the bill. I appreciate your acknowledging that that is not the intention of the bill. The need to make it clear that any innovation or conversion of charter or city or county—absolutely, those students are to be served. It is not the intention to suddenly open up something different and have other students push them out. It is 100 percent meant to serve those kids. I appreciate it, and perhaps when we have a discussion about the science of reading professional development, we can work through some language that would make that intent very clear in the law.

Assemblymember Mosca:

In section 49, on page 92, I want to make sure this is saying that this policy would get rid of the school organizational team (SOT) at the school if this does indeed happen. As we know, in statute right now, we have site-based decision-making at schools with the SOT, with parents, and I am wanting to make sure I am reading this correctly.

Steve Canavero:

In your read, you said it got rid of the SOT, or it just suspended the SOT.

Assemblymember Mosca:

In section 49, line 30 . . . "the school district, suspend or modify any applicable site-based decision-making powers granted to the local school precinct . . ."

Steve Canavero:

That is correct. There is some discretion for the superintendent of schools to modify or suspend those decisions.

Assemblymember Mosca:

Okay, I think that is important for the record. Then my last question: In section 30, subsection 4, on page 62, lines 19 to 34, it talks about all the incentives that would be offered including salary increases, flexible scheduling, specialized training programs, and additional supports. Where did these come from, and if we are willing to offer them to schools that are then failing, why are we not considering them on the front end as well?

Steve Canavero:

I believe this may have come from some models in Indiana or Denver. Some of these are provisions for the innovation schools where they have been used. That is an asterisk. I believe that is where the research ties back to. Obviously, this would be a decision that the state is involved in. Outside of the state's involvement, those decisions could be extended by

a district to a school, in advance of any state-level intervention. However, because it is a state framework or intervention that is being applied, these provisions could then be considered for that school.

Assemblymember Mosca:

I think that is also important for the record.

Assemblymember Watts:

I have questions about open enrollment, and, particularly, some of the transportation provisions in section 23. I am looking at page 50. Earlier in the conversation, there were clarifying questions about the low-performing schools and the accountability measures, clarifying that when public school was used there, it applied both to traditional public schools as well as public charter schools. I am wondering whether that is also the case in this section of the bill; because if so, then is my understanding correct that under this open enrollment policy, if a student moved to a charter school, a district would need to provide transportation for that student to the charter school?

Steve Canavero:

That is a good question, and one I have not thought through. I would hate to provide an answer. I would have to do it in real time. I would prefer to look at the language a bit more clearly, if you would accept that. We have a follow up with you already.

Assemblymember Watts:

I would be glad to. Is this an issue that you have not really thought about too much or is there an intent there? If there is the potential that there needs to be transportation provided to charters, then there are a lot of additional questions about the budgetary mechanisms for that.

Steve Canavero:

It is largely due to bandwidth, at this point—my bandwidth to consider the scenarios that you are putting forth for consideration.

Assemblymember Watts:

It sounds like this is something that needs a little bit of additional time to work through. I was also trying to work through how this would work, even within a school district. If a student moves to another school, to the extent feasible, the district has to provide transportation for the student to that other school that they have been accepted into, or the district has to provide them with a transportation subsidy.

It looks like that subsidy has a cap of not more than two times what it would cost to provide the transportation to the average student. Then it seems it can be a flat rate which is at the discretion of the school district, so there does not seem to be a floor or a guidance. It would just be a flat rate that is determined by the school district. Or, if there is not a flat rate—that is the other part that I am not clear on whether it is one or the other—but then, otherwise, it would have to be reported. In section 23, on page 50, line 19, it says "verified costs." Would

this mean that, essentially, families would need to provide receipts and itemized expenses, and then those expenses would be reimbursed up to 200 percent of what it costs to provide transportation to the average student?

Steve Canavero:

That is my understanding.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Since this is a fiscal committee, I want to make sure we have the fiscal aspects down correctly and that I understand them correctly. As currently written, A.B. 584 provides for total General Fund appropriations of \$10.9 million over the 2025-2027 biennium. Is that number correct?

Steve Canavero:

Yes, that is. You are summarizing the section 66, section 67, and section 68 appropriations.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I am going to go through each one of those sections. So, is that first number correct?

Steve Canavero:

Yes.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

In section 66, there is \$850,000 to the State Treasurer to carry out the Nevada Integrity in Academic Funding Program, correct?

Steve Canavero:

Yes, that is correct.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I am going to ask this once again: how did the Governor's Office determine that the \$850,000 in General Fund appropriations over the biennium was the appropriate amount for this program?

Steve Canavero:

I am looking for a representative of the Governor's Office to chime in here, but we have to get back to you on that.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

All right, we will reach out to the Governor's Office for that answer. In section 67, there is the \$2 million to the Department of Education to provide awards for the pilot program to integrate science, technology, engineering, and mathematics into instruction in literacy. And that amount is correct?

Steve Canavero:

That amount is correct: \$1 million in each fiscal year.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Then, in section 68, there is a total of \$8 million to the Department of Education to carry out provisions of this Act. Could you give this body a list of what that truly means? Are those new employees? What would those positions be? Is that dollar amount the correct dollar amount, and for how many positions?

Steve Canavero:

The \$4 million in each fiscal year in section 68 is accurate. I am trying to think of a reasonable way to do this. How about if I identify new personnel in each of the fiscal years, and then I will go through the categories. There are 24 positions. New personnel costs are \$2,552,405 in FY 2026, and \$3,200,214 in FY 2027; contract costs are \$1,417,045 in the first year and in the second year of the biennium, \$756,631; travel costs are \$30,550 in the first year of the biennium, and in the second year, \$43,155. Those total \$4 million in FY 2026 and then \$4 million in FY 2027.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

What is the number of new full-time equivalent positions (FTEs) that is included in those dollar amounts?

Steve Canavero:

Twenty-four.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Can you tell us how you determined that you would need 24 additional positions to carry out all the provisions in A.B. 584?

Steve Canavero:

Deputy Superintendent, by all means, weigh in. We looked at reporting, reviews, accountability systems and reporting, accountability in school improvement options, department oversight, open enrollment system and oversight, accounts, fundings, and programs, the K-3 STEM literacy work, and the performance reviews and improvement plans development. Those are general categories, then we have personnel, or a management analyst, for example, one, for all of the reporting review. Is that sufficient detail, or would you like more detail for me to go through?

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Well, I really want to know how we got to the \$8 million and then what that \$8 million would be utilized for, and how you determined that you needed 24 new FTE positions to justify the \$8 million.

Steve Canavero:

We reviewed the bill, worked through the deputy superintendents and the directors to identify the requirements within the bill, the timeline of the bill, and the type of work that we would be engaged in, to develop the personnel. We also include in the fiscal note \$1,138,880 for RPDP funding. Travel in the first year, I already went over. There is \$3,000 in supplies for all programs, and \$5,000 in the second year. The accountability system development, we only funded the second year of \$132,191 because there is funding in another appropriation or budget that was closed for the first year of the biennium to help support the work. There are stipends for curriculum and standards, as we typically do for any model curriculum work or the standards adoptions. There is support for organizing within the Department of Education and the consideration of establishing a different office or reorganization within the division. Then contract supports with subject matter experts to build out the program at \$837,809 in the first year of the biennium. In the totality of the work, as we broke it down and we put it across the time frame over the next two years, this is how we felt we could address the needs in the bill.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

You have mentioned the contract cost a few times. What are the specific activities that the \$2.1 million for contract costs would be supporting? What would they be doing, specifically?

Steve Canavero:

The contract costs include the RPDP funding. It includes the subject matter experts. This is relatively new work at this scale for the state, and we anticipate the need for subject matter experts who have perhaps done this work and can inform the development of the plans, can inform the development of the infrastructure that is necessary, and the regulatory frameworks that need to be included. We anticipate some need to bring in subject matter experts. That is what that line contemplates.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Have you already identified those subject matter experts?

Steve Canavero:

I do not know if the agency has identified them. We would determine the needs, depending on the bill's passage, and then work through the state's procurement process, as we typically would, to secure appropriate experts.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Members, do you have any other questions before we go to testimony? Not seeing any, I thank you for the presentation and for answering all the questions. I know there are a number of follow-up meetings that you are going to need to have with members to get through some of the questions that you did not have answers for tonight, and I appreciate you taking those in advance. I am just going to say thank you in advance before you do those.

Our children are our future, and we want to do what is best for them and making sure we have an educational system that is responsive to the needs of our children, no matter what school they go to should be our goal. What I would like to see in this bill that I do not see right now, and it has been mentioned a number of times from members sitting here, you say there are low-performing schools and failing schools. I do not see anything in this bill that helps those schools now. What I do see is an opportunity for kids to move from one school that is low-performing to a school that is not low-performing, and that picks winners and losers, in my opinion.

Our first goal should be that every school throughout the state be a high-performing school. What is it that we need to do that? Our first mission should be, what is it that we need to do to fix those schools, not just the discipline or moving students from a low-performing school, but what is it that we need to do, working together? You mentioned it—it should be an alignment between the state, the districts, and the schools, fighting for higher achievement. That should be a fight for every school, not moving students from a low-performing school to what you or someone else perceives as a high-performing school. Every child in this state deserves to attend a high-performing school. That should be our first goal, and then this should be something second.

So, what is that? I do not see that in this bill. That would be my first ask in those conversations over what we need to put into this bill, to amend in this bill, and that be our first goal. I am looking forward to having that conversation with you, as I am sure the other members on the dais are.

Steve Canavero:

Madam Chair, members of the Committee, thank you for your time and attention, and your questions.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

As I said at the start of this meeting, we are going to do 30 minutes of testimony in support, 30 minutes in opposition, and 30 minutes in neutral, and that is in totality. So, that will be 10 minutes in Carson City, 10 minutes in Las Vegas, and 10 minutes on the phone line. We will be keeping a timer because I want to be fair. With that, we will get started in Carson City.

Colton Brown, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada:

Good evening, Madam Chair, before my time starts, I want to ask on behalf of everyone who has been waiting here and in Las Vegas for five hours now, if we could all have a chance to speak, since this has been a long bill, and I know you are all tired, and so are we. Everyone in this room, I can say, agrees with me that we all deserve a say for this.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

I appreciate you making that ask, but I made the statement at the start of this meeting this morning at about 8 a.m., and I will keep to that. What we can do is, at the end of the testimony in support, everyone here in support who does not have a chance to speak, whether you are here in Carson City or Las Vegas, can stand at the end of that 30 minutes so we can acknowledge that you were here in attendance; and the same goes for those in opposition.

Colton Brown:

I understand. Thank you. Good evening, Chair and members of the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means. I am a 17-year-old student in the Washoe County School District. I am here to express my strong support for A.B. 584. This bill is a life-changing bill, and I really hope you can understand that [[Exhibit H](#)]. First, I want to thank the Governor and the Governor's Office for standing up for students like me; students who need a different way of education than in the traditional public school system.

If A.B. 584 had been in place a few years ago, it would have changed my life a lot sooner. During middle school, I was bullied at my assigned school to the point where I no longer wanted to continue going to school, and my life was threatened. This was a hard time for me, and school became a chore. It no longer became something I wanted to do. Since we are in this country where we have education for everyone, no student should have to go through that.

It was not until eighth grade that I moved to a different school; it was Mater Academy of Northern Nevada, a local charter school. It was an environment that fit me and my needs. This environment got me where I was an honor roll student for the first time ever. That feeling is a feeling that no one can explain but only you can feel for yourself. Mater Academy only went up to eighth grade, so for ninth grade, I had to go to my assigned high school. At my assigned high school, I went back to being bullied by the same group of kids. I was back in that cycle—that cycle that felt not good.

Then I was able to go to the Academy of Arts, Careers and Technology (AACT), a career technical school that I was accepted in. At that school, I was back to a position where I felt safe. It was not because it was a charter school, because AACT is a public school. It was an environment that fit me. This bill would be able to help students who are looking for the same support as me and help students in this way.

Juliette Leong, Private Citizen, Sparks, Nevada:

I am here today to express my strong support for A.B. 584 to expand school choice [[Exhibit I](#)]. Thanks to Governor Lombardo, Nevada is on its way to becoming a true school choice state, giving the children the tools to thrive. Our school system is too large and too slow to keep up with a world shaped by rapidly-changing job markets. That is why families need options like smaller private schools, charter schools, and homeschooling.

I spell at a third-grade level and do high school-level math, and no school could accommodate my needs, so I am homeschooled. Because of that, I have performed at Carnegie Hall, won six national math competitions, and donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to nonprofit organizations through the sales of my paintings.

But what about the child with the same potential, except whose family cannot afford to homeschool? It is not about academics; it is about unlocking talents, building confidence, and creating opportunities. It is about teaching kids to solve problems and make a difference. Since every kid is different and every family has different circumstances, school choice is how we prepare Nevada students for real world success, and that everyone who wants a job, gets a job. The world is moving forward, and Nevada needs to move forward with the world. Thank you, Governor Lombardo, for fighting for school choice.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Juliette, how old are you?

Juliette Leong:

I am nine years old.

Gil Lopez, Executive Director, Charter School Association of Nevada:

We are here to express our support for A.B. 584, particularly with the provisions to expand transportation access and establish teacher incentive programs over highly needed roles. Transportation remains one of the most significant barriers for educational access, especially for families attending public charter school, so we appreciate the extension. In addition, A.B. 584 allows for public charter schools to offer one-time incentive payments to school leaders in hard-to-fill positions. This makes it a lot easier to recruit and retain people in special education, STEM, and other such fields. It is also important to recognize that public charter schools are held to the highest standards, with closure as the ultimate consequence for underperformance. These provisions reflect a strong commitment to fairness, flexibility, and opportunity for all public school students here in Nevada. We thank the Governor, his staff, and this Committee for prioritizing this effort. We respectfully urge you to support A.B. 584.

Logan Hegi, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada:

I am here today to express my strong support for A.B. 584 to prepare Nevada students for real world success [[Exhibit J](#)]. Kids need the chance to learn in an environment that works for them and their families. I had to leave school and start educating myself. I come from a single-parent household. My dad could not homeschool me. We could not afford private school. And the public school I attended did not support me when I started having recurring health issues making me miss at least 60 percent of school. There were no options except dropping out, so I started teaching myself AP [advanced placement] courses and registering for the exams on my own, signing up for online classes, and doing anything that could help me keep up.

But what about the kids who cannot do that? We do not want more school dropouts. We want productive citizens, people who can contribute to society, create jobs, or land jobs that match their talents. That is why school choice matters. Public schools are on a set path. They fundamentally cannot accommodate every individual student. Every family is different; every family has their own problems, some of which other more personalized schools could solve. We need more options, not fewer. I respectfully urge you to support legislation that puts students first, empowers families, and prepares Nevada's youth for the future. Do not let Nevada fall behind.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

We are nearing the ten minutes, so the last two at the table will be the last two in Carson City before we go down to Las Vegas.

Theresa DeGraffenreid, Private Citizen, Gardnerville, Nevada:

I am a resident of Douglas County here today to support A.B. 584 on my own behalf. I have 36 years of experience as an early childhood educator, as a teacher, and administrator. I am pleased to see that the definition of qualified school in section 38 includes preschool, because what I learned as a teacher is a strong education starts at the preschool level, which builds a foundation for K-12 schooling and beyond. It is also critical that parents are supported, as parents are the first and most important teachers of their children. Assembly Bill 584 makes sure that parents are involved.

I am particularly supportive of the provisions in section 43 which call for English language curriculum to include phonics-based instruction. In my career, I found that teaching phonics was an effective way of preparing kids to read. My own children, who are in their thirties, were taught using phonics, and by the second grade, they were reading at a 5th grade level and they were advanced, and they are still advanced and ferocious readers to this day.

I thank Governor Lombardo for bringing this bill. This is a very comprehensive bill to address issues in Nevada schools that have existed for many years. We appreciate his vision. I also attended the hearing for Senate Bill 460, competing 100-page omnibus education bill that was also introduced recently and could not help but notice the differences in questioning. That bill had about 90 minutes of presentation and questions, and we have had over three hours of presentation and questions here tonight. I cannot help but think this was designed to minimize the number of citizens willing and able to stay and give their opinion on the bill.

Anthony Curry, Director of Advocacy, Opportunity 180:

Opportunity 180 is a nonprofit organization working towards the north star of every kid graduating high school, college and career ready, prepared to live the lives they dream. We are here in support of A.B. 584. In our work, we advocate for high-quality public education for every student in Nevada and the conditions necessary for all high-quality public schools, district and charter, to provide high-quality education for every student.

We organize around five evidence-based levers of work: great schools, great ideas, good governance, good data, and an engaged community. We see some of these reflected through A.B. 584. Good governance, one of Opportunity 180's levers, works to ensure that policies reflect evidence-based practices in alignment with improved student outcomes. We are in support of the district accountability measures and interventions included in A.B. 584, as they align with best practices established in states like Massachusetts and Texas.

Charter schools currently serve over 63,000 students in Nevada and are a growing part of our public education ecosystem. Charter schools, through their authorizer, have accountability systems built into their academic, operational, and financial systems, and are held to these standards through a renewable contract and the potential closure for failure.

We support policies that promote growth and sustainability and protect charter school economy. Every kid should be able to read at grade level at the end of third grade. This is a critical benchmark that has been well-researched and documented, and we look forward to working with the Governor's team and other stakeholders to ensure evidence-based practices, training, and student and family supports are implemented as part of a comprehensive Read by Grade 3 strategy.

In a 2025 poll, 85 percent of Nevadans agreed that Nevada parents should be able to send their children to the public school they feel is best for their child, even if it is outside their neighborhood. It is critical that families have the freedom to select a public school that best meets their needs. We champion these opportunities, such as open enrollment, that will establish and support families' agency in navigating their students' educational experience. Parents and family engagement is critical to ensure a high-performing public school ecosystem. In service of Opportunity 180's lever on engaged community, we support initiatives that promote family engagement and support parent-selected intervention programs. These programs have been implemented in other states such as Idaho . . .

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

You have reached your two minutes. Those in Carson City who did not have an opportunity to testify in support, I encourage you to submit your written testimony to the Committee so that all the Committee members can have it. With that, we will go down to Las Vegas, and we will start the timer.

Eric Cardona, Government Affairs Manager, Henderson Chamber of Commerce:

We are here to express our support of A.B. 584. We are specifically encouraged by the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan for our charter school members and the students they serve. For these reasons, we are in support.

Peter Guzman, President, Las Vegas, Latin Chamber of Commerce:

I had well-planned testimony ready to go here [[Exhibit K](#)], but after the testimony of that young girl, Juliette Leong, I am going to forgo my testimony and say the most powerful word I can say right now, and that is ditto. I hope she gets that YouTube video of her testimony and sends it to every parent in this state. Congratulations to that little girl.

Hugh Anderson, Managing Director, Partner, High Tower Las Vegas; and Chair, Government Affairs Committee, Vegas Chamber:

I would like to thank Governor Lombardo for bringing A.B. 584 forward [[Exhibit L](#)]. It has been written with an evidence-based approach and is focused on student achievement and is fostering their academic success. The Chamber supports the bill, as it has been a longstanding legislative objective of ours to increase student achievement within the K-12 public education system. That means there needs to be greater accountability in the operations and management of local school districts, and the Chamber believes that A.B. 584 does this with the provisions proposed in the bill from a fiscal perspective.

The Chamber is not alone in the belief that the K-12 system needs greater state oversight and increased transparency. We know many of the Committee members agree with that belief as well. Assembly Bill 584 helps ensure that the local districts are accountable for the use of billions of taxpayer dollars, along with greater data transparency and accountability, from local school districts to the state. The Chamber supports the bill because it includes sections that relate to creating a statewide system of accountability measures, criteria for identifying low-performing schools, and how accountability will be enforced, including performance plans for underperforming schools, holding trustees of underperforming districts accountable by empowering the State superintendent of public instruction, and the implementation of student-centered reforms.

The Chamber also supports equitable funding for both district public schools and public charter schools, utilization of literacy programs, parent engagement, teacher support, and efficiency in programs and reporting mechanisms, all which contribute towards the improvements in our education system that are critical to moving our state forward in the global economy.

As this Committee knows, Nevada's employers are one of the largest customers of the K-12 education system, and they need students to be either college or career ready upon graduation. That is why the business community has long asked for appropriate accountability measures to ensure that funds are used in a meaningful way that will prepare students for their futures. We believe this bill will be an important step forward in that process.

In closing, the Chamber pledges to continue to collaborate with the Governor and legislators to ensure that resources are directly benefiting students and teachers. Thank you for your time and consideration today, and not only the young lady in red, but I applaud all these students here who have hung out to give you their word.

Olivia Sandoval, Private Citizen, Henderson, Nevada:

I am nine years old and in fifth grade at TCMi Academy. I came today to speak for my little sister, my baby brother, and all the kids like us in Nevada. We have attended TCMi Academy for four years, where I have been able to learn much and it has allowed my little sister to get the extra help she needs. My parents told me that I am responsible for my success, but I know that it has been a team effort. My parents have sacrificed so much to

make sure my little sister and I can keep going to TCMI Academy. Our teachers have worked hard to teach us and take the time with each of us so we can fully understand the work we are completing. I know their commitment to our education has helped me become the student I am and help my sister get the special attention she needs. Thank you for listening to me and caring about kids like me.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Thank you, Olivia. How old are you, again?

Olivia Sandoval:

I am nine years old.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Thank you for testifying tonight.

Olivia Neely, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am here to support A.B. 584 because I believe every child deserves a choice in their education. I am homeschooled now, but I was not always. My old school did not make me feel safe. There was a lot of bullying and even violence, and it hurt not just me, but also my sisters. We felt like no one was really helping us. Now that I am homeschooled, I am learning in a way that works for me, and I feel supported and safe. Thank you, Governor, for supporting this bill. It means so much to kids like me and families like mine. Assembly Bill 584 gives us hope and a chance for something better.

Ana Wood, Director, Government Affairs Chair, Las Vegas Asian Chamber of Commerce:

Inbred in our Asian upbringing, education is our top priority; our main focus. Since the inception of the scholarship program in 1998, we take pride during AAPI [Asian American Pacific Islander] month to grant scholarships to Asian American high school seniors who work hard and strive for a better tomorrow. It is important that as Nevada continues to grow, the learning needs of all students in Nevada are met by providing and preparing them with tools and resources that best fit each one of them so they will be able to succeed now and adapt to the everlasting changes in the workforce for years to come. All families deserve the opportunity to select the school of choice for their children. All educators must be held accountable, and we must ensure safety, efficiency, and transparency at all levels, specifically, making sure funds reach the classroom as intended. I respectfully urge your yes vote on A.B. 584.

Aliyah Escudero, Private Citizen, Nevada:

I am here today to express my strong support for A.B. 584. Thank you, Governor Lombardo for introducing this bill. I have two little sisters and one big brother. We used to go to a school I loved, but my parents decided to homeschool us because they could no longer afford the tuition. We did try public school, but I was behind in reading, writing, and math. Homeschool has actually helped me learn better, but I still really want to go to a school where I can be around other kids, play sports, and feel like I am a part of something. I miss

that. The truth is, not all kids learn the same, and not all schools work for everyone. If there was more funding for school choice, kids like me can go to schools that help us grow and do our best—schools where we feel safe, supported, and excited to learn. It should not matter where you live or how much money your family has. Every kid deserves a chance. That is why I ask you to please support A.B. 584.

Hector Escudero, Private Citizen, Nevada:

I am here to support A.B. 584, introduced by Governor Joe Lombardo. Growing up in public school, I struggled to keep up. Some students learn fast, but I needed more time and support, and I did not get that. By eighth grade, I switched to homeschooling, and it was so much better for me to understand what I was learning, and I was able to move at the pace that worked for me.

My two younger sisters had trouble in school, especially with reading, math, and spelling. Once we started homeschooling, we began to catch up and gain the confidence in learning, but I know we could do even more with even better resources. Assembly Bill 584 would give families like mine the ability to choose the education path that fits us best, whether that is public, private, or homeschool. When students have options, they are more likely to succeed. Not every teacher can meet every student's needs, but school choice allows us to find the environment that does. This bill would help more students and have them feel more seen, supported, and capable of reaching their full potential. I respectfully ask you to support A.B. 584.

Julia Manzano, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am here today to voice my support for A.B. 584 and to thank Governor Lombardo [[Exhibit M](#)]. Like many of the students here, I have been testifying in front of legislators to protect school choice since I was about 12. I ask that you listen to their voices and listen to mine. Please listen to the voices that you guys represent. In that way, say yes to A.B. 584.

Sam Castor, Private Citizen, Nevada:

I am a father of five, four with special needs, all fourth-generation Nevadans, all at Clark County School District (CCSD). I am an adjunct law professor at Boyd [UNLV] and lead a law firm, IEPDefenders.com. We defend special needs children at no cost to their families. We have sued Nevada school districts 200 times in the last 18 months and won every single case. The Legislature has passed a lot of good laws, but districts like CCSD do not follow the law. They do not care. I have 200 examples. It does not matter if it is a Democratic law or a Republican law; it does not matter who passed it. Nevada districts do not follow the law. Why? Because there is no accountability. You have given districts \$11.5 billion this biennium, and it does not matter how much you give a school—if there is no accountability, it will never, ever, be enough. This bill has five ways to stop waste, and loss, and to hold districts accountable. Put me out of a job and pass this bill.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Mr. Castor, you will be the last one there. If there are others there to support this bill, if you want to, stand up so that we can acknowledge you, and I ask that you also submit your written testimony of support to the Committee, if you have not already. Thank you so much, and thank you for being here tonight. We will now go to the phone to see if we have anyone who would like to testify in support of Assembly Bill 584.

Joshua Skaggs, Legislative Affairs Director, Nevada Republican Party:

I am here today in support of Assembly Bill 584. Thank you, Governor Lombardo, for your commitment to raising the bar in education for Nevada. The Nevada Republican Party supports A.B. 584 because it introduces a robust framework for accountability in education, guaranteeing that underperforming schools take decisive action to improve student outcomes. The bill establishes a statewide system of accountability, allowing the superintendent of public instruction to modify, suspend, or eliminate redundant reporting requirements to streamline oversight. Assembly Bill 584 mandates interventions for low-performing schools, including leadership restructuring, direct state management, or conversion to charter schools. These measures reinforce the principle that educational institutions must meet established benchmarks to continue receiving state support. Assembly Bill 584 would rightfully expand school choice, granting parents greater flexibility in selecting the best educational environment for their children. Through section 38, the Nevada Integrity in Academic Funding Program, families with students in chronically underperforming schools can access alternative educational settings, including charter and private schools, using state funds. This initiative makes certain that students are not confined to failing institutions due to financial constraints, fostering a more competitive education system. Section 17 of A.B. 584 further strengthens Nevada's commitment to educational excellence by creating the Excellence in Education Account which provides grants for high-performing teachers and administrators. By incentivizing excellence and holding schools accountable, the bill establishes a balanced approach to reform, prioritizing students' success while empowering educators and families. Please support A.B. 584.

Annette Dawson Owens, Private Citizen, Henderson, Nevada:

I am here in my individual capacity to express my strong support of A.B. 584 and my gratitude to our Governor, Superintendent, and leaders who prioritized every one of our Nevada students having access to high-quality education and who also believe in accountability for all our schools, ensuring that every child has the support they need to be at-or-above grade level, and be fully prepared upon graduation for a lifetime of success. Thank you to all for your energy and devotion to this bill, to your continued commitment to this cause, and your support for a plan that strategically aligns schools, districts, and the state, in the educational outcomes for all of our Nevada students together.

Jesus Marquez, Director of Operations, American Christian Caucus:

I am also a parent of two K-12 students. I also represent hundreds of parents from different churches, small- to medium-sized, across the state. I strongly support Assembly Bill 584, Governor Lombardo's Accountability in Education Act. As someone directly involved in public education, I have seen a need for more transparency, more accountability, and more

options for our families. This bill does exactly that. It ensures education dollars are used wisely, empowers parents and students, and expands access to high-performing public charter schools that are changing lives, literally, especially in underserved communities like Latino communities. I am a half-Hispanic myself, and I take this very proudly and to that point. We need to push students first, not only systems. That is why I support A.B. 584. I respectfully urge you to do the same.

Abraham Canejo, Private Citizen, North Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am calling in support of Assembly Bill 584. I would like to say thank you to our Chair and all the members of the Committee on Ways and Means for your time and dedication to this. I am calling in support because I feel strongly that parents need to have more school choice. Our community has continued to change and evolve over the years, and we need different options, transparency, and more access, especially in our communities of North Las Vegas, East Las Vegas, and our rural communities, as well. I am a parent of six. I have four children who are in school, and I am looking forward to continuing to work with everybody in our community.

Noemi Abrego, Private Citizen, Nevada:

I am in support of A.B. 584. Thank you to the Governor. I am a mother to three children at CCSD; I am taking three of my children out. One has an IEP and has been bullied and physically attacked. I am supposed to get updates on what is going on with this, and I have not received any updates on a daily basis. There are a number of reasons why I am taking them out, but safety is number one. There is a huge disconnect between teachers and the absence of children, and that is because of the disconnect that we have here. I believe one of the reasons why this district is at the bottom of the barrel is because of that as well. There were always two classroom moms willing to help at the previous daycare that I was at, and there is no connection here. I feel alienated. Anyway, I yield my time.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

We are coming up to 30 minutes, so this next caller is our last caller in support.

Jesus Marquez, Private Citizen:

I am a student in support of A.B. 584 because as a student, I want more than promises; I would like results. This bill helps families like mine by holding schools accountable, supporting teachers, and giving parents access to their schools. That includes public charter schools that are making a big difference in our community. Assembly Bill 584 will put students like me, not bureaucracy, first and at the center of education. I strongly urge you to support A.B. 584.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Thank you all so much for your comments and joining us tonight. Anyone else who was joining by phone who did not get an opportunity to make your testimony, I encourage you, if you have not done so already, to send your written testimony to the Committee.

[[Exhibit N](#), [Exhibit O](#), [Exhibit P](#), [Exhibit Q](#), [Exhibit R](#), [Exhibit S](#), [Exhibit T](#), [Exhibit U](#), and [Exhibit V](#) were submitted but not discussed and will become part of the record.]

With that, we will close support, and we will move to opposition. If there is anyone in Carson City who would like to testify in opposition to Assembly Bill 584, I invite you to the table and if you are in Las Vegas, I invite you to fill the seats at the table there. We will start with ten minutes in Carson City, ten in Las Vegas, and ten on the phone. You can go ahead and get started.

Rachel Croft, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada:

I am speaking in opposition. I am a teacher here in town, and I have no problem being held accountable for student learning, but I need to be given the tools and the resources that I need to actually help students succeed. Expecting schools to do more with less feels like watching someone struggle to swim and being told to shout directions at them from the shore. Assembly Bill 584 demands better outcomes without giving us the per-pupil student funding that we need to achieve them.

I am a 20-year veteran, and I use research, science of reading in my teaching, and research is important. I feel like this bill ignores the research that we know about performance. Transformative education demands time, patience, and, honestly, a deep investment. Real change in learners and in systems does not happen overnight or even in two years; it grows from consistent commitment and courageous reflection. Speaking about commitment, I am concerned that this bill is a recipe for pushing dedicated educators out of the profession, especially those of us who work in Title I schools. If we really want to improve outcomes, we need to invest in our students and our schools. I urge you to oppose A.B. 584 and support fiscally responsible solutions that lift students up rather than leave them behind.

Robert Munson, representing Nevada State Education Association:

I am a 27-year veteran in the school district in northern Nevada, here representing the Nevada State Education Association in opposing A.B. 584 [[Exhibit W](#)]. Opponents of public education often point to Nevada's struggling schools to argue for more school choice. But expanding school privatization, including using underperforming schools as a pretext, only makes matters worse by siphoning away public dollars from our public schools and the students we serve. Meanwhile transferring public dollars to fund private interventions, while the same services are on the chopping block in our public schools, highlights the hypocrisy of this bill.

This bill is antiteacher, streamlining the process to fire postprobationary teachers rather than providing the resources and supports necessary so that teachers can be successful. These proposals rely on flawed educator performance framework and disproportionately impact teachers who choose to work in lower-income communities with some of our most at-risk students, which risks reversing the recruitment and retention success over the past two years.

Educators across Nevada demanded that Governor Lombardo Pass the Plan to fully fund Nevada's public schools, and his response was to simply dismiss educators, stating we can no longer accept the lack of funding as an excuse for underperformance. But this mediocre \$2 increase does not keep up with inflation, as we rank 47th in the nation, boasting the largest class sizes. Accountability without funding misses the mark. Assembly Bill 584 earns a big red, "See me after class." Please do not support this bill.

Dylan Shaver, representing Washoe County School District:

There was a time early in my career when I worked for one of your fathers, where I could get up here in the neutral position, because there is a lot to like about the bill and there are just some things the district cannot get behind; we were allowed to do that. Under your rules today, as we cannot endorse the totality of the measure, I have to be here in opposition, though certainly not as impassioned as, maybe, some previous speakers were.

Realistically, there are just a couple of things in here that Washoe County School District (WCSD) cannot endorse. For example, pegging accountability further to the Nevada school performance framework, which we all know is flawed, and frankly, a measure of affluence more than anything. We were incredibly invested in helping to fix that.

There are several sections of the bill that pull from the State Education Fund to do other programs. It might be great programs, but we have to remember that is where the per-pupil allocation comes from. So, it is a concern. We believe that if that is a priority of the Legislature to fund programs like that, it should come from the General Fund and not from the same pot of money from which we draw our per-pupil allocations.

Finally, provisions, for example, in sections 47 and 51, take what may be good human resources policy today, as it relates to performance plans for postprobationary teachers and administrators, which WCSD does—but we worry about a world where, to change those things, we would need to come back either to the Legislature, or go through the Administrative Procedures Act, to change what was previously a flexible human resources policy.

With all of that, we want to make sure to get on the record that we definitely support Governor Lombardo's goals with this bill. We want to be accountable for educating every student in our care, and WCSD does not shy away from that. And to that end, we commit to continue to work with the Governor's Office, with Superintendent Canavero, as well as the members of this Committee, to help get something meaningful out of the 2025 Legislative Session.

Mary Pierczynski, representing Nevada Association of School Superintendents:

The first thing I want to say is it is quite clear there is a deep commitment here at the Legislature and also at the Governor's Office to improve education in Nevada. That deep commitment is appreciated. The Nevada Association of School Superintendents appreciates

the funds that were allocated last session to our school districts. Hopefully, superintendents have tried to be very responsive when asked how that money was spent. The accountability, hopefully, was sufficient to assure you that the money went where it was designated to go.

This bill is very comprehensive. It is long; it is detailed, and full of initiatives and designations and directives. The superintendents appreciate part of the bill. For instance, section 46 is really a good section, talking about school employee immunity; something that is very important to teachers and administrators who are breaking up fights and making good-faith interventions, as we call it in the schools. But we have concerns about some other sections; section 29 for instance, where, if there is no improvement in the school, there is a replacement of the principal, a transfer of management of the school to city managers or county managers, converting the school to a charter school, and converting to an innovation school—which, Mr. Speaker, you referred to that. I think a lot of us recall innovation schools. Perhaps this is a different plan, but that one did not work out very well. It was not very successful.

Also, section 37 is a concern of the superintendents. Maybe we are not understanding it right, but on the surface it looks like public funding would be going to private schools. Again, maybe we are not understanding that right. The superintendents would like to encourage that the work by the commission . . .

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Ms. Pierczynski, I have to stop you. Seeing, no one else approach the table in Carson City to testify in opposition, we will go to Las Vegas.

Terri Shuman, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I would only be sitting here lying if I was to tell you I was not impressed by our little students. I was very impressed, and I believe in my heart that if our classes were not too large, if our educators were not at a distinct disadvantage by shortages and have a lack of support by our chronic underfunding, meaning \$2 per student—I just cannot understand that one—but if all these things were not against us, I know, I believe, that our students could read and perform and be taught just like all these other students.

Assembly Bill 584 sets schools with high concentrations of poverty up for failure by threatening probation and state takeover if they do not meet performance benchmarks. It uses poor performance as a pretense. I just want to say, I do not believe charter schools are the way to go. My greatest concern is for those of us who belong to our unions and were forced to go into a charter school. What would that do with our membership? I just know that if we did not have a \$2 amount on each head and were able to be adequately funded . . . and we go over this every two years; we are talking about funding, funding, funding. We just have to make a change. We have to say these kids are worth it. These are our kids, who, one day, will be sitting in your seats, and we have got to help them.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Not seeing anyone else in Las Vegas to testify in opposition, we will go to the phone line for anyone who would like to testify in opposition to Assembly Bill 584.

Danielle Ford, Member, Nevada State Board of Education:

As the elected member of the Nevada State Board of Education, I represent nearly 800,000 Nevadans. I am speaking in strong opposition to Assembly Bill 584. This bill is a Trojan Horse for privatization, and the fact that it was presented by an interim superintendent, who has been in the role for a month, is not just outrageous, it is insulting to the entire public process and everyone involved.

The Department of Education has been working on a shared public-facing vision for our schools called Portrait of a Nevada Learner, which has been developed through collaboration with families, educators, and with full support from the State Board. Not once has this bill, A.B. 584, or anything like it, been brought to us for discussion. To be clear, the State Board of Education is in the process of selecting a new superintendent before the school year begins. The person presenting this bill, Steve Canavero, will not be in the role when these changes will take effect. Yet, here he is, pitching a sweeping governance overhaul that was never vetted by the Board, never agendized, and never subjected to public debate at a public State Board meeting. The audacity. Assembly Bill 584 would give him unilateral power to label districts as failing, use control of budgets, override elected trustees, and convert public schools into charters or undefined innovation schools.

Section 38 rebrands vouchers as RISE Accounts to funnel public funds into private schools and services, and on top of that, the bill will open enrollment and transportation without providing sustained funding. A one-time \$30 million bonus pool is not a solution; that is just a distraction. This is not reform. It is a power grab dressed up in buzzwords. Assembly Bill 584 bypasses local governance, it buries the public mandate, and it fast tracks privatization under the guise of accountability. Our schools could be successful, and our students could get the education they deserve, if we stop letting these people try to take away public education. I strongly urge you to vote no on it.

Alexander Marks, Deputy Director of Field and Communications, Nevada State Education Association:

It is fitting and even perhaps poetic that on the very day the Governor's bill is heard, a federal court struck down the Executive Order to dismantle the U.S. Department of Education. These are not just parallel events. They expose a coordinated ideology from Washington to Carson City to blame educators, defund public schools, and rebrand it as accountability. It is the same playbook, just different stages; at the federal level we are seeing it with an illegal reckless action supported by the Governor which we have defunded programs and please educate our kids. We all know about his \$2 budget. We know how detrimental that is going to be. We urge you to oppose this bill.

Malcolm Greer, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

Assembly Bill 584 diverts money from neighborhood classrooms, piles on costly yet unfunded mandates, and channels public funds to private and charter schools. This bill compels every district to build new accountability offices and run complex open enrollment lotteries without providing a single dollar to pay for them. It then allows up to 90 percent of a student's state and local aid to flow into private RISE Accounts—a voucher in disguise—leaving public schools to cover fixed costs exhausting revenue. To enforce these changes, the State superintendent may label whole districts as low-performing and cease key powers and even replace elected trustees, stripping communities of democratic control. Students need smaller classrooms, qualified teachers, and counselors, not the privatization schemes. For these reasons, I respectfully urge a no vote on A.B. 584.

Amanda Morgan, Legal Director, Educate Nevada Now:

For the past decade, Educate Nevada Now has fought to improve access to quality public education. For years we have followed the national trajectory of education policy. We can tell you that many of the reforms offered in A.B. 584 might have been deemed innovative in the past, but today, they have been tried and tested in other states. You have the luxury of knowing before passing these reforms that they have not worked. That is why we stand in opposition to this bill.

Vouchers have not worked. In fact, states that have gone all-in on vouchers have eventually squandered billions of dollars, largely funding those who are already in private schools. And when vouchers do attempt to serve struggling students, the outcomes have been consistent. Studies in Louisiana, D.C., Ohio, and Indiana found the majority of voucher recipients either did not improve or performed worse in core subjects—not to mention the fraud and abuse discovered in places like Alabama, Arizona, Nebraska, and elsewhere.

State takeovers and charter conversions have not worked—innovative ideas several years ago, but the results never came. District takeovers are now being reversed in states like Tennessee and Michigan, where there is bipartisan agreement that these experiments failed. Louisiana is now reconverting charters back into public schools for the same reason. The irony is this bill throws much spaghetti at the wall but fails to address what we know works: funding the essential resources that improve student outcomes. In fact, another bill proposed by the Governor, Senate Bill 471, aims to undo the mechanism in the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan that required consistent investments in public education and ended the practice of supplanting funds. We have seen these experiments fail throughout the country. We urge you to avoid a decade of mistakes and vote no on A.B. 584.

Vicki Kreidel, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am a veteran educator in CCSD. I teach at Lomie G. Heard Elementary in the East Valley. The year before last, my school, using ESSER [Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund], was able to raise our star rating from 1 to 3 stars. We invested in people, not things; we built a reading center and built systems that work for all of our

students. Sadly, my school is losing most of those systems next year due to budget cuts. I know for certain that schools can figure out what works. But to do this, we need adequately funded schools in Nevada.

Let us be real. Assembly Bill 584 does not help students; it threatens them. This bill pretends to be about accountability, but what it actually does is punish under-resourced schools for struggling under the weight of chronic neglect. Threatening schools that do not perform with being taken over is not justice; it is sabotage. This bill does not address the root issues. It does not recruit more educators; it does not shrink class sizes; it does not fund counselors or social workers. It does not offer solutions. It offers blame. And guess who it impacts the most? Black, Brown, and low-income students. Communities already fighting to survive now have to fight off a state takeover too. We need investment, not threats; support, not scapegoating; equity, not more control from the top down. Our kids deserve better, and honestly, so do the educators and families holding this broken system together with duct tape and heart. Please oppose A.B. 584.

Susan Kaiser, Private Citizen:

I am a national board-certified teacher. To become a licensed educator, every education major studies Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The five needs, in their importance, form a pyramid, with those most important appearing at the bottom. These needs include physiological needs such as food and water. Once children have all they need to survive, function, and understand their position in their community, they are equipped to become self-actualizing to learn. Without these needs, Maslow demonstrated, children are unable to learn. It is apparent that Maslow's hierarchy is foreign to Nevada's Governor since he vetoed free lunches last session. Now our Governor proposes a plan which starves the brains of our children.

Nevada's per-pupil funding remains \$4,000 below the national average, even though \$1.3 billion is parked in the Rainy Day Account. Rather than allocating money to create a path for success in all of Nevada's public schools and following the recommendations of the Commission on School Funding, the Governor proposes an increase of just \$2. His bill is designed to pit schools and districts against each other, creating winners and losers. His plan punishes struggling schools, as if the students are purposely failing to achieve. This solution, not unlike No Child Left Behind, has been tried and failed. Multiple commissions have already concluded that inadequate, inconsistent, and short-term funding is what keeps Nevada's public schools from being their best. Whether you are a legislator in your first term or in your last, you are serving today. You are serving the people of Nevada, including our children. Our students do not have a voice in these plans, but they do have us, their teachers and other school staff, delivering this message. Please, oppose Senate Bill 500 and A.B. 584, and instead, Pass the Plan.

Isaias Gallegos, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am here today as a former student of public schooling to voice my opposition to A.B. 584. I have personally seen the failures and flaws in public education. I have seen the stress of the teachers who have done their best to help the students. I understand the need for reform,

accountability, and a quality education, but A.B. 584 will bring none of those things. If passed, this bill will instead bleed public funding from already struggling schools, making them even worse and perform even more terribly, and would also drain these funds into private bank accounts and to the private bank accounts of private schools without real oversight. It would also strip communities of their voice over education by allowing the State superintendent to seize key powers, even replace elected trustees by simply labeling school districts as under- or low-performing. I believe in accountability reform and a quality education, but it has to be fair, realistic, and paired with the necessary funding to support success—not a bunch of privatization schemes that steal money from Nevada students and programs. For these reasons and more, I urge the Committee to vote no on A.B. 584.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

This will be our last caller.

Mohamed Bilal, Private Citizen, Henderson, Nevada:

I am a Nevada resident, and I am here to strongly oppose this bill. From what I have been reading, it just sounds like another privatization bill. It sounds really good at first, but once you get to the part where it is blatant that you are just trying to turn the school into a charter school; that is when you have to step back and examine it a little bit more.

Unfortunately, public education does have its problems. I have a little sister who is going to school right now. She is having to pay crazy prices for just dance class and some teachers do not even have the resources. That is mainly due to lack of funding. As far as I can tell, this bill is just a cash grab by Lombardo and friends. That is all I can simply say. I strongly denounce this bill, and I strongly denounce Lombardo and his best friends who I think planned to put this out today while our public education is being defunded at the same time.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

With that, we will close opposition, and we will move to neutral. If you are here to provide neutral testimony on Assembly Bill 584, I invite you to the table. Not seeing anyone approach the table in Carson City, we are going to go to Las Vegas.

David Gardner, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am a special education attorney, a father of six, five who attend the CCSD. I have recently represented the Nevada Department of Education at the Office of the Attorney General. I am in neutral, mostly because I need clarification regarding section 1. The idea, in general, of removing reports is great. There are just a lot of statutes, both statewide and federally, that need to be double-checked before any reports are removed. When I was in the Legislature, it was brought up all the time that we have too many reports for teachers and things like that. So, I get the gist. I just want to make sure that would be used with caution, as there are a lot of tricky federal laws that you do not always know are directly related. That was the first thing.

I very much appreciate some of the members' discussion regarding local control. I am a huge supporter of that. It is actually one of the reasons why I really oppose the Senate Majority Leader's bill, as she is trying to gut all CCSD local control.

The final thing is, funny enough, when I was in the Legislature about a decade ago, we passed a \$1 billion tax increase. It was really hard, and most of us lost our seats because of it, me included, and the opposition at that time—the opposition when we did that says the same thing—we never have enough money. Since that time there has been a \$1 billion tax increase and then another \$2 billion tax increase. When will there be enough?

Ed Gonzalez, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am the vice chair of the Hickey Elementary School Organizational Team in the northeast part of Clark County. I am speaking in neutrality because I am seeking clarification on section 49, on page 92. I want to thank Assemblymember Mosca for bringing that up in the conversation. As a member of a school organizational team (SOT) at a one-star school, I am wondering how broad this language will be on the suspension of a school organizational team, when you are talking about a principal who is deemed not effective. We talked about local control; there are concerns, just in general, when you are talking about the broadness of it. Does it mean that we would revert back the funding and the budgetary process to the Clark County School District? I say that only because I am wondering what the Department of Education has said is being brought forward in this.

Especially at Hickey, during the September budget crisis, our funding, due to inappropriately allocating the EL [English Learner] at-risk and also the teacher pay increases, we lost \$700,000 onto it, and it took a significant hit on our budget. I am wondering whether it is the intention to give that control back to the district which is still under a compliance monitor for poor budgeting practices? Not only that; the SOT does not really have much of a say when the principal is struggling in this aspect because they give advice, consent in doing that. I want to know does it make sense to do that? Speaking in neutrality, and as I said, seeking more clarification on this, because it is taking an aspect of local control away that we talked about in other parts of this bill and other things as well. I want to ask for clarification about how broad that could be. Finally, the State Board of Education is having their Assembly Bill 469 of the 79th Session subcommittee meeting next month to deal with some of the issues in the reorganization; maybe this could be done too.

Erica Neely, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I know not everyone agrees on how to fix education, but what I like about A.B. 584 is that it really tries to help and put kids first, especially the ones who have been struggling in failing schools. It does not just throw money at the problem.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

We are in the neutral. Are you testifying in neutral or in support?

Erica Neely:

Yes, I am a neutral. It holds schools accountable and helps reward great teachers. I understand why some people are worried about losing local control or expanding choice. But for me, this bill is about fairness, making sure every student, no matter what their background is, has access to quality education. That is something we should all want.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Not seeing anyone else approach the table in Las Vegas for neutral testimony and no one at the table in Carson City, we will go to the phone line to see if there is anyone who would like to provide neutral testimony on Assembly Bill 584.

Cyrus Hojjaty, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I will ditto the previous commentator who just spoke.

[[Exhibit X](#) was submitted but not discussed and will become part of the record.]

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Having no other callers, we will ask the presenter of the bill for any closing remarks. He is indicating no. So, with that, we will close the hearing on Assembly Bill 584, and we will open public comment.

I will remind anyone who wants to provide public comment that it is general public comment, not any mention of the bill that we had before us tonight. Not seeing anyone approach the table in Carson City and not seeing anyone at the table in Las Vegas, we will go to the phone line to see if there is anyone who would like to provide public comment.

Katrin Ivanoff, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I just wanted to say, maybe when you have such a long hearing and a lot of people wanting to testify, you can give more time than 30 minutes for people to testify, because, obviously, there was a lot of interest for testimony. When people are that interested—let us face it, most of the time people are not interested to testify. Most of the views, you hardly can fill up ten minutes on each side so, when people have testified, maybe you should think about giving them a chance to do so, especially when those people are young adults, and this is really directly going to affect them. That was a long hearing; have a lovely evening, everyone.

Remainder of page intentionally left blank; signature page to follow.

Chair Monroe-Moreno:

Members, thank you. We have had a long day. We started this meeting over 12 hours ago. I truly appreciate all the work; this might be the way the rest of our life goes until the end of session. With that, this meeting is adjourned [at 8:46 p.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Geigy Stringer
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Assemblymember Daniele Monroe-Moreno, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBITS

Bill	Exhibit	Witness / Agency	Description
	A		Agenda
	B		Attendance Roster
S.B. 500	C	Nevada State Education Association	Written comment in opposition
A.B. 476	D	Assemblymember Howard Watts, Assembly District No. 15	Proposed amendment
A.B. 483	E	Assemblymember Tracy Brown-May, Assembly District No. 42	Proposed amendment
A.B. 584	F	Steve Canavero, Interim Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education	Conceptual amendments
A.B. 584	G	Steve Canavero, Interim Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education	Supporting materials to bill presentation
A.B. 584	H	Colton Brown, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada	Testimony in support
A.B. 584	I	Juliette Leong, Private Citizen, Sparks, Nevada	Testimony in support
A.B. 584	J	Logan Hegi, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada	Testimony in support
A.B. 584	K	Peter Guzman, President, Las Vegas Latin Chamber of Commerce	Letter in support
A.B. 584	L	Hugh Anderson, Managing Director, Partner, High Tower Las Vegas; and Chair, Government Affairs Committee, Vegas Chamber	Testimony in support
A.B. 584	M	Julia Manzano, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada	Testimony in support
A.B. 584	N	Various individuals	Emails in support
A.B. 584	O	Various individuals	Emails in support
A.B. 584	P	Various individuals	Emails in support
A.B. 584	Q	Various individuals	Emails in support
A.B. 584	R	Sarah Adler, representing Public Charter Coalition of Northern Nevada	Written testimony in support
A.B. 584	S	Cynthia Perine, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada	Written testimony in support
A.B. 584	T	Kathleen Seline, Second Vice President, Churchill County Republican Central Committee	Written testimony in support

A.B. 584	U	Danica G. Hays, Dean, College of Education, and Kenneth J. Varner, Associate Dean for Academic Programs & Initiatives, University of Nevada, Las Vegas	Letter in support
A.B. 584	V	Nicole Rourke, Director of Government and Public Affairs, City of Henderson	Letter in support
A.B. 584	W	Nevada State Education Association	Written testimony in opposition
A.B. 584	X	Carissa Pearce, Government Affairs Manager, Children's Advocacy Alliance	Letter in neutral