

Legislative Update

CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

May 1, 2015

Highlights from Week 13:

If you've ever tuned into the proceedings of the Economic Forum, you know that the meetings aren't exactly full of nail-biting drama or high entertainment. After plodding through forecasts and spreadsheets, the Economic Forum announced what has been expected since before the session began: Nevada's current tax base is not expected to generate enough revenues to support the Governor's Recommended Budget for the upcoming biennium. The Governor's Recommended Budget requires \$7.4 billion over the next two years, and the official forecast of the Economic Forum projects our current tax system will produce \$6.3 billion. Lawmakers must either trim the budget or create additional revenue streams before the end of the session.

The focus of the last 30 days of the session will be on how to balance the budget, specifically in the Assembly where the divisions among the body may make it difficult to find support, particularly since any tax bill passage requires support by 2/3 of the body. Keep an eye on SB252 (the Governor's tax plan) and AB464 (the alternate plan presented by Majority Leader Anderson and Assemblymen Armstrong) as these discussions move forward.

MONDAY, APRIL 27

Senate Finance

Several education bills were scheduled for a hearing at 8:00 am on Monday but were pulled from the agenda due to time constraints and rescheduled for a rare Thursday evening meeting of Senate Finance. Education advocates were relieved, since Ways and Means was scheduled to hear several other education bills in a different hearing room but at the same time, negating the need for us to be in two places at the same time.

Assembly Ways and Means

- ~ **AB394** – The Assembly Committee on Ways and Means heard AB394, a bill that would require the deconsolidation of the Clark County School District. The discussion of the committee centered on the costs of the study that is required before the district was to be split into at least 5 separate school precincts. While addressed in testimony, the committee has yet to discuss the actual costs of splitting up the school district and how money would be appropriated for the process before the 2017 Nevada Legislative Session.
- ~ **AB395** – Also heard was a bill requested by the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA). The bill came before the Ways and Means Committee because of the fiscal note related to additional staff and training for staff. The bill would grant SPCSA regulatory authority for certain processes related to charter schools and would allow them to reclassify their employees to “unclassified” status, allowing them to be paid differently.
- ~ **AB448** – Although this bill, which would create the Achievement School District, was originally scheduled to be heard, it was not heard since AB394 and AB395 consumed most of the meeting. The hearing will be rescheduled.

Assembly Education

- ~ **SB13** – The Assembly Education heard SB13, a cleanup bill by the Nevada Department of Education to align certain special education provisions with the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA).
- ~ **SB75** – Also heard was CCSD's bill, which would ensure students attending year-round schools or campuses with other alternative calendars, have the same number of school days to prepare for criterion-reference tests. The bill was voted out of the Senate unanimously both in committee and on the floor and received support from other school districts and education groups. Unexpectedly, some members of the audience suggested the bill be amended to allow an opt-out provision to testing. CCSD had not been approached about this proposal and considers it to be an unfriendly amendment and counter-productive to the intent and purpose of the bill.
- ~ **SB208** – This is a bill that would require charter schools to notify neighborhoods that they will be opening near them. The charter schools would be required to bear the expense of the notification and ensure it is delivered before students are enrolled in school. The Committee discussed flexibility for the charter schools if they don't have the money before the beginning of the school year.
- ~ **SB313** – Presented by the Davidson Academy, this bill would allow the school for profoundly gifted students to provide a program of distance education. The bill received no opposition.

- ~ **SB390** – This bill would allow charter schools to provide priority to students who attend a traditional public school that is overcrowded by 25% or more. The major discussion during the hearing centered on how school districts would notify parents that their student attends an overcrowded school. These discussions are still ongoing.

TUESDAY, APRIL 28

Senate Education

- ~ **AB107** would revise the requirements of school accountability reports to include data on retention, dropout, graduation, GPA, and test scores for students eligible and participating in free and reduced price breakfast and lunch programs. The bill was supported by the school districts and other education groups who will work with the department on systems to provide the data.
- ~ **AB178**, presented by Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson, is a bill that would provide principals with flexibility in the discipline of students. The bill was supported by school districts, education groups, juvenile justice, and the ACLU.
- ~ **AB 205** – Also sponsored by Assemblyman Tyrone Thompson, AB205 would require the Legislative Commission on Education to study mentoring programs during the 2015-16 interim. This bill also received widespread support as groups recognized the important role of mentoring in the lives of young people.
- ~ **AB321** – The Senate Committee on Education also heard AB321, a bill that would provide a pathway for police services at charter schools. The Clark County School District offered an amendment that would aid charters schools by letting them contract police services through the local school district, leaving the local police to handle only major incidences on campus. The bill had much debate and no immediate solution has been reached. Additional meetings and discussions are ongoing to find a solution that is tenable to both the charter schools and the local police authorities.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29

Assembly Education

- ~ **SB1955** – The Assembly Committee on Education heard SB195, a bill pertaining to higher education.
- ~ **Work Session:** The Committee passed four bills, including SB25 with various requirements for the Nevada Department of Education and the State Board, SB200 on charter schools, SB205 on school emergency plans, and SB 418, another higher education bill.

THURSDAY, APRIL 30

Senate Education

- ~ **AB166** – The Senate Committee on Education heard AB166, a bill that will add the seal of bi-literacy to a qualifying student's diploma. During the hearing, the committee discussed how intensive the program would be to make sure only those who are truly bi-literate will be eligible. There seemed to be unanimous support for the new program and many who testified were students from across the state enrolled in multi-lingual programs.
- ~ **AB285**, the bill that allows students with diabetes to self-administer insulin, was supported by the school districts and education representatives and was unopposed.
- ~ **AB374**, the bill that requires counselors or other licensed staff to meet annually with students to discuss their options for college and career, was widely supported by school districts, higher education, business representatives and other individuals. No one opposed AB374.
- ~ **Work Session:** AB27, AB30, AB112, and AB150 were all passed by the committee in work session and will move to the floor for a vote by the full body of the Senate.

Senate Finance

Senate Finance scheduled an evening committee hearing, starting at 5:00 pm, to hear the bills originally scheduled for Monday morning. The hearing lasted nearly four hours, and we're appreciative of the members of the Finance Committee for devoting an evening to hear these education bills.

- ~ **SB391** – The Senate Committee on Finance held a hearing on SB391, the "Read By Three" bill. This bill would provide support services for students in the early grades to focus on improving the literacy rates of students. The bill would require students who are not reading at grade-level to be retained in the 3rd grade starting in the 2020 school year. AB391 is a priority of Governor Sandoval and the bill provides funding to school districts and charters school to begin building their literacy programs. CCSD fully supports this bill and feels these measures would provide significant support to struggling readers.

- ~ **SB405** – Another priority of the Governor is expanding the Zoom School program. This bill would double the funding for Zoom schools, and allow the grant money to be used for parent engagement and professional development along with the existing programs: free preschool, full-day kindergarten, reading centers, and an extended year. Expanding funding for Zoom Schools is among CCSD’s top priorities.
- ~ **SB432** – The bill establishing high poverty, low performing schools as Victory Schools that would receive grants to fund specific services. Similar to Zoom schools, full-day kindergarten, preschool programs, reading centers, and extended time are allowable expenses under the new grant program. Additionally, schools can choose to provide wrap-around services, incentives for teacher recruitment and retention, parent engagement activities, professional development, and evidence-based programs. School districts, education organizations, community groups, and others supported the measure.
- ~ **SB474** – This bill is known as the Great Teachers and Leaders Fund and is the reflection of the work of a large consortium of entities working to improve the “Teacher Pipeline” to insure all students have an effective teacher. The bill would provide funding for professional development that a variety of providers could apply for. Of concern for some, particularly the rural areas, is the need to ensure that Regional Professional Development Programs (RPDPs) would still be fully-funded since in those areas they are the only providers of professional development.
- ~ **SB491** – This bill would provide funding for the creation of a “Harbor Master” to develop charter schools in Nevada. State Superintendent Erquiaga compared this request to the “Catalyst Fund” and “Knowledge Fund” approved by previous legislative bodies. The focus would be the recruiting charter management organizations.
- ~ **Work Session:** The Senate Finance Committee voted unanimously to pass SB504, the Governor’s bill on bullying, and send it to the full body of the Senate.

FRIDAY, MAY 1

Economic Forum

The Economic Forum met on Friday to deliver their forecast for the Nevada economy over the next biennium. The Forum reviewed tax revenues for gaming, sales, entertainment, and other taxes collected by the State of Nevada. Meeting materials are available on the Nevada Legislature website here:

<https://www.leg.state.nv.us/interim/77th2013/Committee/NonLeg/EcForum/Other/1-May-2015/MeetingPage.cfm?ID=24&d=1-May-2015>.

Coming Up:

To keep current about hearings that are scheduled (and sometimes rescheduled) during the session, it’s important to utilize the “Calendar of Meetings” link on the Nevada Legislature website (www.leg.state.nv.us). There you will find the most accurate list of committee meeting dates and times as well as the bills scheduled to be heard.

Upcoming Meetings

Upcoming Meetings Week of May 4-8, 2015

Bill #	Description	Status/Location	Next Meeting Title	Next Meeting Date
SB192	Revises provisions relating to sexual conduct between certain persons. (BDR 14-731)	Judiciary	Assembly Committee on Judiciary	5/4/2015 8:00 AM
AB312	Revises provisions governing the Public Employees' Retirement System. (BDR 23-975)	Government Affairs	Senate Committee on Government Affairs	5/4/2015 1:00 PM
SB241	Revises provisions relating to collective bargaining. (BDR 23-1030)	Commerce and Labor	Assembly Committee on Commerce and Labor	5/4/2015 1:30 PM
SB313	Authorizes the governing body of a private school or a university school for profoundly gifted pupils to provide a program of distance education. (BDR 34-1032)	Education	Assembly Committee on Education -- Work Session Item	5/4/2015 3:15 PM
SB390	Revises provisions relating to charter schools.	Education	Assembly Committee on Education -- Work	5/4/2015 3:15 PM

	(BDR 34-78)		Session Item	
SB463	Revises provisions relating to education. (BDR 34-411)	Education	Assembly Committee on Education	5/4/2015 3:15 PM
AB52	Revises provisions governing the persons responsible for a child's welfare. (BDR 38-192)	Health and Human Services	Senate Committee on Health and Human Services -- Work Session Item	5/4/2015 3:30 PM
AB60	Revises provisions relating to ethics in government. (BDR 23-309)	Legislative Operations and Elections	Senate Committee on Legislative Operations and Elections	5/4/2015 3:30 PM
AB456	Abolishes certain committees, boards, funds and panels. (BDR 38-551)	Health and Human Services	Senate Committee on Health and Human Services -- Work Session Item	5/4/2015 3:30 PM
SB310	Revises provisions relating to local government financing. (BDR 22-827)	Government Affairs	Assembly Committee on Government Affairs	5/5/2015 8:30 AM
AB124	Revises provisions governing punishment for crimes. (BDR 4-182)	Judiciary	Senate Committee on Judiciary	5/5/2015 1:00 PM
SB411	Allows the imposition of additional statutory taxes in a county to fund capital projects of the school district based on the recommendations of a Public Schools Overcrowding and Repair Needs Committee and voter approval. (BDR S-140)	Taxation	Assembly Committee on Taxation	5/5/2015 1:30 PM
SB403	Revises provisions relating to elections. (BDR 24-799)	Legislative Operations and Elections	Assembly Committee on Legislative Operations and Elections	5/5/2015 4:00 PM
SB330	Revises provisions relating to education. (BDR 34-724)	Education	Assembly Committee on Education	5/6/2015 3:15 PM
SB394	Revises provisions relating to the protection of children. (BDR 38-264)	Education	Assembly Committee on Education	5/6/2015 3:15 PM

Attachments

This update references the following materials which are attached to the email:

- *CCSD Legislation Status Report 5-1-15*

Want to Learn More?

In case you didn't know: the Legislative Counsel Bureau's Research Division produces a variety of publications on many topics. On the left side of the Nevada Legislature website is a picture of a portion of the Nevada State Seal. Superimposed on top of that graphic are several links that take you to rich resources that may not be accessed as often as other links. The sixth link, "Research/Library," is well worth exploring.

Are you a history buff? Want to find bill information from a prior legislative session? Or find the representative for your school? The Research Division publishes bill summaries, legislative reports, Policy and Program Reports, Research Briefs, the Directory of State and Local Government, and general information regarding the Nevada Legislature. The site is a wonderful historical resource. It contains information on legislators dating back to 1861, a list of vetoed bills as early as 1899, and many other interesting facts from sessions of the past. Visit

<https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Division/Research/Publications/index.html>.

Looking for more recent information? Under Research Briefs and Issue Papers you can find the 2015 Nevada Education Data Book which gives an overview of Nevada's education system. The Division also posts research on many education topics including full-day kindergarten, teacher performance pay, Career and Technical Education and other issues. The site is also a rich resource for other Nevada industries such as healthcare and energy. Visit <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Division/Research/Publications/ResearchBriefs/index.html>

There is also a search function in this area of the website that allows you to search by school to see who represents your campus. <https://www.leg.state.nv.us/dbtw-wpd/SchoolSearch.htm>

Happy Hunting!