

**NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
COMMISSION ON SCHOOL FUNDING  
FEBRUARY 4, 2021 AT 2:30 P.M.  
CONTINUED: FEBRUARY 5, 2021 AT 9:00 A.M.**

**Meeting Location**

**Due to the circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission on School Funding met via videoconference. In accordance with Governor Sisolak’s State of Emergency Directive 006, Section 1, no physical location was designated for this meeting. The meeting was livestreamed on the Nevada Department of Education’s (NDE) website.**

**SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION MEETING**

<b>FEBRUARY 4, 2021</b>	<b>FEBRUARY 5, 2021</b>
<p><b>COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT</b> <b>Via Videoconference</b> Dusty Casey Andrew J. Feuling Jason Goudie Guy Hobbs Dr. David Jensen Paul Johnson Mark Mathers Punam Mathur Dr. R. Karlene McCormick-Lee Jim McIntosh Dr. Lisa Morris Hibbler</p>	<p><b>COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT</b> <b>Via Videoconference</b> Dusty Casey Andrew J. Feuling Jason Goudie Guy Hobbs Dr. David Jensen Paul Johnson Mark Mathers Punam Mathur Dr. R. Karlene McCormick-Lee Jim McIntosh Dr. Lisa Morris Hibbler</p>
<p><b>DEPARTMENT STAFF PRESENT</b> <b>Via Videoconference</b> Heidi Haartz, Deputy Superintendent of Business and Support Services Jessica Todtman, Chief Strategy Officer James Kirkpatrick, Administrative Services Officer III Beau Bennett, Management Analyst IV Megan Peterson, Management Analyst III</p>	<p><b>DEPARTMENT STAFF PRESENT</b> <b>Via Videoconference</b> Heidi Haartz, Deputy Superintendent of Business and Support Services Jessica Todtman, Chief Strategy Officer Will Jensen, Director, Office of Inclusive Education James Kirkpatrick, Administrative Services Officer III Beau Bennett, Management Analyst IV Megan Peterson, Management Analyst III</p>
<p><b>LEGAL STAFF PRESENT</b> <b>Via Videoconference</b> Greg Ott, Chief Deputy Attorney General</p>	<p><b>LEGAL STAFF PRESENT</b> <b>Via Videoconference</b> David Gardner, Senior Deputy Attorney General</p>
<p><b>PRESENTERS</b> <b>Via Videoconference</b> Catherine Byrne, Controller, Nevada State Controller’s Office Lori Hoover, Chief Deputy Controller, Nevada State Controller’s Office</p>	<p><b>SUBJECT MATTER EXPERTS PRESENT</b> <b>Via Videoconference</b> Amanda Brown, APA Consulting Justin Silverstein, APA Consulting</p>
<p><b>AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE</b> <b>Via Videoconference</b></p>	<p><b>AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE</b> <b>Via Videoconference</b></p>

**FEBRUARY 4, 2021**

**1: CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL**

Meeting called to order at 2:30 P.M. on February 4, 2021 by Commission Chair R. Karlene McCormick-Lee. Quorum was established.

**2: PUBLIC COMMENT #1**

John Vellardita, Executive Director, Clark County Education Association submitted public comment regarding the implementation of Senate Bill (SB) 543. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Ryan Russell and Robert Salyer of Allison MacKenzie Attorneys & Counselors at Law submitted public comment on behalf of certain school districts regarding the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan (PCFP). *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Beth Martin submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

The Nevada State Education Association submitted public comment regarding the implementation of SB 543. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

**3: NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION UPDATE**

Heidi Haartz, Deputy Superintendent for Business and Support Services provided an [Update](#) to the Commission regarding the work of the Nevada Department of Education (NDE or the Department) since the last Commission meeting.

Responding to Member Jason Goudie, Deputy Superintendent Haartz clarified that inflationary adjustment is calculated year by year and applied to Statewide base per-pupil funding; she noted that further agenda items would provide more clarity regarding inflation within the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan (PCFP). Member Goudie asked how State Special Education funding would flow through the PCFP. Deputy Superintendent Haartz noted that the Commission previously recommended that State funds for Special Education not be included in the PCFP; instead, they would be budgeted and expended in a separate budget account which would be used for federal MOE match funding. She further noted that each of the three options presented allowed for increases in Special Education funding and that the amount for each district is defined by their MOE requirements.

Member Mark Mathers reflected that inflation is used to build the State budget and its effect is critical; he asked if the Department planned to adjust the budget to reflect the inflation numbers for 2020 and 2019. Deputy Superintendent Haartz responded that the Governor's recommended budget includes inflationary changes; due to the transition from the Nevada Plan to the PCFP, that inflationary shift is based on the Nevada Plan and generates an increase in the available funding under the PCFP.

Member Dusty Casey asked for clarification regarding Special Education weighted funding. Deputy Superintendent Haartz noted that when identifying the base rates for Special Education, NDE followed the same methodology used in Spring 2019; looking at the budgeted amount for both State and local contributions and dividing that amount by the number of students budgeted to be served with those funds, using funding amounts currently in place for K-12 education. Member Casey requested further information regarding estimates for fully funding Special Education. Member Paul Johnson highlighted that under Special Education MOE, local contribution is not a revenue source, but an expense from the general fund.

**4: PRESENTATION SUMMARIZING THE RECOMMENDED EXECUTIVE BUDGET FOR THE 2021-23 BIENNIUM RELATIVE TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SENATE BILL 543**

Heidi Haartz, Deputy Superintendent for Business and Support Services, conducted a PowerPoint presentation regarding the [Governor's Recommended Budget for K-12 Education 2021-23](#), and Catherine Byrne, Nevada State Controller, was available for follow-up questions.

Deputy Superintendent Haartz noted that the Nevada Plan served as the starting point for the budget building process to facilitate the transition to the PCFP. The Governor's recommended budget included some restorations to State-funded grant programs reduced in the 31<sup>st</sup> Special Session (2020), as well as some reductions.

Member Mathers stated that once the PCFP is fully implemented, the local school support tax and all property tax monies based on the 75% operating rate for districts would constitute a majority of the funding the State Education Fund; he asked whether that would satisfy the requirement that a substantial portion of monies in a given fund be restricted. By extension, he asked Controller Byrne whether this would change the view on a special revenue fund in the State Education Fund versus the State Education Account. Member Mathers further noted that SB 543 requires county treasurers to transfer all property tax collections, based on the 75% operating rate, to the State Education Fund. The Controller's office requested additional time to gather the necessary information and respond regarding a special revenue fund, with Deputy Superintendent Haartz's support.

Member Johnson clarified that under SB 543, only one third of funds were sourced from the general appropriations fund, with the remaining sourced from local revenues; as such, it should qualify as a special revenue fund. Member Johnson expressed the importance of education funds remaining within education and highlighted that currently funds not spent by the district revert to the general fund and may be redistributed outside of education. A State Education Fund would prevent this practice, but was currently planned for the 2023-25 biennium, as the phased approach would retain an education account for the 2021-23 biennium.

Vice Chair Guy Hobbs stated that SB 543 was already law; under existing law, the PCFP qualifies as a special revenue fund. While there is reasoning for an account during the transition, it is crucial to migrate to a special revenue fund for full implementation of the PCFP. Member Mathers noted that Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement 54 does not require a majority of the revenues to be restricted to qualify for a special revenue fund, just a substantial amount to be restricted; the Department of Taxation has issued additional guidance. Controller Byrnes asked for additional time to review the request.

Member Punam Mathur asked if it was possible to establish guardrails around the fund in the interim to prevent reversions. Deputy Superintendent Haartz noted that further work would need to be done with the Controller's Office on the matter. She clarified that under the current recommended budget, the State Education Account would include provisions ensuring that revenue would not revert at the end of each fiscal year, instead rolling forward from one fiscal year to the next; at the end of each biennium any funds that remained in the account would be transferred into the Education Stabilization Account.

Member Jim McIntosh noted that SB 543 is currently the law and asked if further legislation was in place outlining these changes to adapt for a phased implementation; Deputy Superintendent Haartz responded that a bill draft request was under development.

Member Goudie expressed concern that any time there is a State budgetary item deemed to be merit- or raise-based, the bargaining units immediately look at that as money that should be directly provided to the unions and employees; however, because it is comingled with inflation and other costs it causes some challenges for the districts. He reflected for the record that the budget has a huge number of moving components to it and this is just one aspect; there are also decreases, and the budget in totality has to be considered. Member Goudie asked if the recommendation from the Commission related to the ending fund balance would be included in the bill draft request being developed. Deputy Superintendent Haartz replied that the bill draft request would include clarifying language as requested by the Commission. Deputy Superintendent Haartz noted that within phase one of the transition, hold harmless amounts within all school districts is based on the funds received in fiscal year 2020 (FY20), but is limited to those funds that have historically been distributed through the Department. The hold harmless amount does not include local revenues.

Member Johnson inquired about some of the estimates, to which Deputy Superintendent Haartz noted that several adjustments were made when looking at the Nevada Plan including revenues, restorations, and reductions which then dictate what flows through the State Education Restoration Account and later the PCFP. Member Johnson noted that it was confusing; Deputy Superintendent Haartz responded that the Department was working to develop one-page handouts showing the budgetary transition from the Governor's recommended budget to the Nevada Plan and the PCFP. Member Johnson noted that, under the Nevada Plan, 85% of general fund revenue moves through the equity allocation model to ensure a uniform system of schools; under SB 543, 100% of

revenue will move through an equity allocation model. However, in the transitional model, only 40% of revenues will move through an equity allocation model. Member Johnson stated that this creates less equity and Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 387.121 requires that the State transition to the PCFP without causing an unexpected loss of revenue to any school district. Deputy Superintendent Haartz noted that when looking at all funds received by school districts in FY20 versus the available funding in the phased implementation of the PCFP, there would not be sufficient funding to support the hold harmless for districts.

Member David Jensen asked if districts that had a local school support tax above 100% would be maintained by the local district, which Deputy Superintendent Haartz confirmed. Member Jensen asked whether class size reduction requirements would be eased in correspondence with cuts to in class size reduction funding. Deputy Superintendent Haartz noted that districts would submit class size waivers under the established process.

Member Jensen noted that the Commission may make recommendations and there are three items he would like to highlight; the hold harmless lacking consideration of enrollment growth; protecting dollars that were previously categorical funds from collective bargaining, similar to the current SB543 requirement for weighted funds; and using enrollment data based on quarter three numbers.

Member Mathers asked whether categorical grants shifted into base funding would still have the program or accountability requirements previously associated with them, or if they would have flexibility and latitude under base funding; Deputy Superintendent Haartz stated that districts would have greater flexibility.

In consultation with Chief Deputy Attorney General Greg Ott, Chair McCormick-Lee confirmed that the Commission would continue consideration of this item when they reconvened on Friday, February 5.

#### **5: DISCUSSION REGARDING THE TRACKING OF LOCAL MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT (MOE) FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION IN THE STATE EDUCATION**

This item was held for consideration when the Commission reconvened on Friday, March 5.

#### **6: PUBLIC COMMENT #2**

No public comment.

#### **RECESS**

Chair McCormick-Lee requested a recess; the Commission meeting would resume agenda item 4 on Friday, February 5<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 A.M. Meeting recessed at 5:02 P.M.

#### **FEBRUARY 5, 2021**

#### **7: CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL**

Meeting called to order at 9:00 A.M. on February 5, 2021 by Chair McCormick-Lee. Quorum was established.

#### **8: PUBLIC COMMENT #1**

Ms. Todtman read into the record public comment representative of all comments submitted. Additional public comment was submitted in addition to those listed below; such comments were sent to the Commission for review and are available in Appendix A.

Chris Coleman submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Katie Simon Holland, Senior Strategic Advisor, Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada, submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Janine Luciani submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Dan Browley submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Skye Snyder submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Aimee Jacobs submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Calen Evans submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Angie Reeder submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

MJ Ugando submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Amy Bentel submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Maggie Babb submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

John Vellardita, Clark County Education Association, submitted public comment regarding revenue and the implementation of the PCFP. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Lindsay Anderson, Washoe County School District, submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Chris Daly, Nevada State Education Association, submitted public comment regarding the implementation of the PCFP. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

#### **4: CONTINUED: PRESENTATION SUMMARIZING THE RECOMMENDED EXECUTIVE BUDGET FOR THE 2021-23 BIENNIUM RELATIVE TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SENATE BILL 543**

*The Commission continued their conversation regarding Item 4.*

Member Casey confirmed that under phase one of PCFP implementation, local revenues are not included, districts would continue to fund Special Education efforts for MOE through their distributed general fund dollars, and that the Department was currently assessing how funds would reach charter schools. He voiced concern over the State portion of funding going to charter schools, as it appeared to be an over 50% reduction. Deputy Superintendent Haartz noted that the equity allocation model under the Nevada Plan, used in phase one implementation, calculates the local contributions for each charter and adjusts district allocations to reduce payments equivalent to funds due to charters. She noted that NDE was working to obtain the tax projections for each district so cost projections could be validated.

Member Johnson noted that he shared in Member Casey's concerns, and reflected that current estimates were not transparent and may imply that districts have more funds than they will actually receive. Member Johnson affirmed that the Commission voted on December 18<sup>th</sup> to proceed with SB 543 implementation in its entirety and was not aware that an alternative – phased implementation – was under consideration.

Member Andrew Feuling requested clarification regarding the Education Stabilization Account; Deputy Superintendent Haartz responded that the Governor's recommended budget includes the recommendation to move forward with the establishment of the Education Stabilization Account, with its transfer of the State Education Account to occur at the end of the biennium. Deputy Superintendent Haartz noted that the Education Stabilization Account would be a stand-alone budget account based on the recommendation in the Governor's budget and provisions in statute that would protect the funds from reversion. The Governor's recommended budget would not impact the implementation or development of the Education Stabilization Account, which would occur during phase one.

Member Johnson asked if there would be provisions to assist school districts in the event funding is lower than projected for operations. Deputy Superintendent Haartz responded that there are not currently provisions that would allow the State to backfill revenues, but federal COVID-19 relief funds may be an option, as districts may allocate emergency relief funds to support the needs of their district. Member Johnson expressed continued concern with the hold harmless.

Vice Chair Hobbs requested detailed models with regard to the phased implementation and the Nevada Plan and the PCFP; Deputy Superintendent Haartz noted that the information is readily available, as the budget was built from the Nevada Plan and Equity Allocation Model, and PCFP models for FY22 and FY23 have been previously shared.

Chair McCormick-Lee summarized that items for further follow-up included projected local revenues, charter school allocations, true-up provisions, and the hold harmless. Deputy Superintendent Haartz noted that the Governor's recommended budget did not include a hold harmless for charter schools. Member Feuling asked that a frequently asked questions document be drafted regarding the phased implementation.

Member Punam Mathur asked about the process for Commission recommendations and the outcomes of those recommendations. Deputy Superintendent Haartz responded that the Legislature has received the Commission's recommendations; certain changes specific to K-12 funding and the PCFP within the Governor's recommended budget would require amending statute via legislative action.

## **9: DISCUSSION REGARDING THE TRACKING OF LOCAL MAINTENANCE OF EFFORT (MOE) FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION IN THE STATE EDUCATION FUND**

Heidi Haartz, Deputy Superintendent of Business and Support Services, and Will Jensen, Director of the Office of Inclusive Education, facilitated a discussion regarding local Special Education funding and MOE requirements within the State Education Fund and the PCFP.

Deputy Superintendent Haartz noted that the options presented to the Commission, including the placement of expenditures in the PCFP, would not impact school districts' ability to continue to provide funding at current levels. It also does not prevent a school district from indicating that they would like to increase their local contribution to support students who have special educational needs. There are options for demonstrating the allocation in the PCFP while ensuring accountability:

1. Option one was to account local contributions the same way that transportation and food services are accounted for;
2. Option two would be to allocate funds within the PCFP for expenditure purposes only; and
3. Option three would be to run funds through the hold harmless and apply a reduction to the adjusted base per pupil amount corresponding to each districts' request for MOE.

Member Mathers confirmed that, within phase one, the State's portion of Special Education funding is outside of the PCFP, while local district Special Education funding is within adjusted base per-pupil funding. Deputy Superintendent Haartz noted that a recommendation regarding the model would not affect phase one implementation but would impact full implementation in the following biennium. Deputy Superintendent Haartz supported resolving this decision, as it would provide the Department the ability to build business rules.

Member Casey requested clarification regarding the implications of the different options. Deputy Superintendent Haartz responded that the recommendations under option one or two would be a carveout, with funds specifically

held outside the allocation for base per-pupil funding so that districts could identify what their MOE should be in each fiscal year. Member Casey felt MOE should stay with base funding; option one would treat Special Education differently than other weights, and option two creates inflexibility for districts.

Member Goudie stated that weights do not apply to Special Education and had concerns regarding adequacy and transparency. He believed that separating Special Education provides the best opportunity to meet the aspirational goal of optimal funding. Deputy Superintendent Haartz suggested taking the amount of revenue included in the State Education Accounts and subtracting the funding that would be necessary for local school districts to maintain their contributions for Special Education. The resulting funding could then be allocated through the waterfall of the PCFP. Member Goudie agreed in concept but noted that Special Education funding is an enormous unfunded mandate by the federal government. Member Goudie requested more time to further consider the matter, although he expressed support for option one because of its clarity.

Member Mathur expressed that including Special Education in the formula was important, as it was at the heart of the PCFP. The funding held outside of the waterfall would also be an understatement of the amount that the public are investing into Special Education, which she noted was a transparency issue.

Responding to Member Feuling, Director Will Jensen confirmed that State MOE is based on what has been made available to students with disabilities in the previous year within the State, and was unrelated to local contribution. The three options relate to local contributions, and State contributions are accounted for outside of the PCFP. Should a district need additional funds, it would be funded by the same process currently in place. Member Feuling expressed concern in response to Director Jensen's clarification.

Member Casey asked if numbers would change by district and charter school and how would that affect base funding. Deputy Superintendent Haartz explained that under option one, the funds identified by each school district and charter would represent a local contribution to Special Education services; that total across all districts and charters would be subtracted from the revenues in the State Education Account before any funding flowed through the PCFP. Should a school or district need additional funds, they would be taken out of the adjusted base for pupil funding amount, which would change the MOE requirement for the district or school in the following year. Deputy Superintendent Haartz noted that, in any of the three options, if a district or charter school were to increase spending on Special Education in a fiscal year, they would have an obligation to continue to expend the same amount of funds in subsequent fiscal years. The Commission requested additional time for consideration.

*[Convenience Break]*

## **10: DISCUSSION REGARDING THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF FUNDING ALLOCATED TO THE NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES IN EACH FISCAL YEAR**

This item was pulled from the agenda to be discussed in March.

## **11: DISCUSSION REGARDING PUBLIC-FACING SUMMARY DOCUMENTS**

Jessica Todtman, Chief Strategy Officer, provided an overview of a draft public-facing [Summary Document](#). Ms. Todtman requested feedback and noted that the document was drafted prior to the Governor's recommended budget.

Member Feuling suggested adding language to further clarify the meaning behind the "restore and maintain" phase of progressing to optimal funding.

Member Mathur suggested including stronger statements regarding the urgency for adequate funding. Member Goudie agreed and recommended providing more information about the research that has been conducted demonstrating that most states have moved to a student-centered funding model. He further suggested the selection of a subcommittee of the Commission to be prepared to address questions the Legislature may have.

Member Lisa Morris-Hibbler provided additional suggestions on simplifying the text and requested that the document be translated into multiple languages.

Member McIntosh noted that there were hyperlinks in the document and advocated for further details regarding the research studies mentioned by Member Goudie.

Member Johnson requested further information about the State Education Fund and its purpose, the Education Stabilization Account, and a graphic for the waterfall.

Member Jensen supported incorporating suggestions to the extent possible while keeping the document brief. He recommended including target timelines for restoration and optimal as well as funding amounts.

Moving to the matter of advocacy, Chair McCormick-Lee summarized that the Commission was in support of continued advocacy for the PCFP. Member Mathur suggested continued vigor and asked whether they might consider presenting to Legislative Committees on their work. Chair McCormick-Lee agreed that Legislative activity would be an item for future discussion.

## **12: DISCUSSION REGARDING OPTIMAL FUNDING**

Chair McCormick-Lee reviewed the previously determined progression of restoration, adequate, and optimal Funding. She noted that further clarification by the Commission is needed for all three levels of funding in the areas of measurement, calculation, and approximate annual funding targets. After discussion regarding the progression levels, Chair McCormick-Lee indicated that the definitions would be refined based on the feedback and brought to the Commission during the March meeting.

Member Goudie stated that to support adequate and optimal funding for Special Education, there needs to be a dedicated funding mechanism comprised of local and State components. Member Johnson referenced the APA Consulting per-pupil base amount, but noted that the APA study had three numbers under adequacy, defined by a successful schools approach, a professional judgement approach, and an evidence-based approach. Member Johnson emphasized the importance of determining which approach to optimal the Commission would pursue and noted his support for the professional judgement approach.

Chair McCormick-Lee noted that optimal funding included a description of “student achievement on par with the nation’s best,” which needs further definition. Member Goudie reflected that comparing Nevada’s students to the nation’s best is flawed when the nation itself was behind in achievement scores. Chair McCormick-Lee suggested specific tests or objectives be used to measure achievement.

Member Mathers, with agreement from Member Casey, noted that the requirement for the State to fund Special Education and eliminate base funding subsidies for it should be considered under adequate, rather than optimal. Members Jensen and Johnson noted their opinions that it should remain under optimal.

Member Mathers asked whether standards had been reviewed in comparison to other states. Amanda Brown, APA Consulting, responded that the professional judgement approach responds to this review, detailing the expectations in the State and the variables involved to meet all expectations and standards. Member Mathers noted that the professional judgement approach extrapolated its metrics using a small set of schools and asked if it could be done for each district. Chair McCormick-Lee noted Member Mathers’s question for future conversation. Vice Chair Hobbs noted adjustments to the wording of the document.

Member Mathur asked whether the PCFP needed to be in closer alignment with the State’s five-year strategic plan, the Statewide Plan for the Improvement of Pupils (STIP), as most of the requirements and measurements in K-12 are defined by the STIP. She asked whether the STIP should be referenced further for alignment with optimal and adequate funding definitions, as what they are funding and the benchmarks the STIP aspires to deliver are closely aligned. Chair McCormick-Lee suggested analyzing the concept of optimal similarly to the process used in defining adequate and applying it to the actual cost for each district to meet STIP goals. Member Mathur noted that she was interested in a professional judgement analysis based on the requirements of the STIP rather than existing State standards.

## **13: DISCUSSION REGARDING POTENTIAL REVENUE SOURCES FOR OPTIMAL FUNDING**

Vice Chair Hobbs and Member Johnson conducted a PowerPoint presentation regarding [Revenue Sources for Optimal Funding](#). Vice Chair Hobbs noted that next steps included trying to quantify values over the course of time and that the Commission should remain alert for new revenue sources.

Member Jensen was supportive of using mining taxes as a revenue source, and Member Goudie was optimistic for the potential of using property taxes. Member Johnson asked whether different revenue sources should be prioritized for further review. Vice Chair Hobbs noted that the review of revenues must include an evaluation methodology, a review of depreciation, and a review of abatement.

Chair McCormick-Lee referenced the desirable factors for revenue sources: sufficiency, predictability, equity, and competitiveness. She asked if the goal was to find multiple revenue sources or a single revenue source that would address funding needs. Vice Chair Hobbs responded that it wasn't yet clear. Vice Chair Hobbs further noted that while many revenues are dictated by the legislature, some are more difficult to amend than others.

Vice Chair Hobbs requested target values for each year in order to proceed; Chair McCormick-Lee asked if it should be linear or based on adequate funding for the base, followed by adequate funding for the weights, etc. Member Goudie noted that how adequate and optimal are implemented will define the funding needed, and funding expectations will need to be aligned with program outcomes; this should structure the Commission's recommendation.

Member Mathur asked that a model be developed to present to the governor and the public which could toggle between different Commission recommendations for implementation. This model could also include plateaus and values plotted over the next decade and include resources for how these numbers could be achieved. Senior Deputy Attorney General David Gardner noted that barring a legislative bill passed regarding a ten-year plan, there is no guarantee that a future legislative session would not discard a given ten-year plan, as a future legislature is not required to abide by a previous one.

Vice Chair Hobbs recommended the Commission work toward developing a schedule for restorative, adequate, and optimal funding levels, and asked that this be prepared for the March meeting. He also noted that work would continue to find as many funding sources and funding alternatives as possible, and that priority items for the March meeting would include a schedule of target funding needs.

#### **14: APPROVAL OF COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

**Member Jensen moved to approve the January 8, 2021 Commission minutes. Member Johnson seconded. Motion passed.**

#### **15: FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Chair McCormick-Lee summarized that future agenda items would include further discussion regarding the hold harmless, Special Education MOE, phased implementation, enrollment growth and inflation, local revenues, mid-year true-ups, optimal funding, generation of revenues, NDE administrative costs, and the cost of staffing.

Member Goudie asked for further information regarding how districts will allocate State funds to schools and anticipated flexibility.

Member Jensen requested further information related to protecting education funds.

Member Mathers noted that further discussion on the cost adjustment factor was also still pending.

#### **16: PUBLIC COMMENT #2**

Educate Nevada Now submitted public comment regarding the implementation of the PCFP. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

#### **17: ADJOURNMENT**

**Member Mathur moved to adjourn. Member Jensen seconded. Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 1:20 P.M.

*Appendix A: Statements Given During Public Comment*

1. Clark County Education Association submitted public comment regarding the implementation of SB 543.
2. Ryan Russell and Robert Salyer submitted public comment on behalf of certain school districts regarding the implementation of the PCFP.
3. Beth Martin submitted public comment regarding cost of living in Washoe County.
4. Nevada State Education Association submitted public comment regarding the implementation of SB 543.
5. Chris Coleman submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
6. Katie Simon Holland, Senior Strategic Advisor, Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada, submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
7. Janine Luciani submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
8. Dan Bowley submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
9. Skye Snyder submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
10. Aimee Jacobs submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
11. Calen Evans submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
12. Angie Reeder submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
13. MJ Ugando submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
14. Amy Bentel submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
15. Maggie Babb submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
16. John Vellardita, Clark County Education Association, submitted public comment regarding revenue and the implementation of the PCFP.
17. Lindsay Anderson, Washoe County School District, submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
18. Chris Daly, Nevada State Education Association, submitted public comment regarding the implementation of the PCFP.
19. Brendan Wiebe submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
20. Charlye McKenna submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
21. Cindy Anderson submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
22. Dana Hamilton submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
23. Elizabeth Cadigan submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
24. Jacqueline Wiebe submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
25. Jamie Vaughn submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
26. Jessica Conine submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
27. Joy Anhold submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
28. Kristen de Haan submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
29. Lauren Proffitt submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
30. Mark Proffitt submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
31. Mary Proffitt submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
32. Rachel Fisher submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
33. Renee Fox submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
34. Robyn Donavon submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
35. Stephanie Segal submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
36. Tim Wiebe submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
37. Ty Martin submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
38. Vicki Bowley submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County.
39. Educate Nevada Now submitted public comment regarding the implementation of the PCFP.
40. Angela Heard submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County. *Submitted after the conclusion of public comment.*
41. Dallas Hulsey submitted public comment regarding the cost of living in Washoe County. *Submitted after the conclusion of public comment.*

**Item A1, Clark County Education Association**

Re: Public Comment for February 4, 2021 SB543 Commission Meeting

SB 543 Commission Members:

With the convening of the 2021 Nevada Legislative Session the recommendations of this Commission will be helpful for Legislators and the Governor to move forward with the new Pupil Centered Funding Plan. CCEA wants to express our deep appreciation for the work this Commission has done as well as the support provided to you from the staff of NV Department of Education. Many of the recommendation the Commission has made we support and we will advocate during the Legislative Sessions for those recommendations.

Over the next two days two very important issues: optimal funding and recommendations for potential sources for optimal funding will be discussed . We believe these will be the most important recommendations you make. We know those discussions will be policy centric, as all of your discussions have been to this point. Maintaining that approach and making recommendations on those issues can help Legislators and the Governor make sound policy decisions not political ones when it comes to Nevada's k- 12 education system.

Finally, we just want to share with the Commission that given the fact that our economy has been devastated by the pandemic as a result of being so dependent on two industries, now more than ever as Legislators and the Governor chart a course of recovery, investing in our State's education delivery system is paramount. Our economy must diversify and key to that is having a workforce with the education and skill to serve those industries and businesses. Nevada's k-12 system is the base of Nevada' s k-20 education delivery system. We must strengthen the base. To that end the implementation of SB543 is critical for our future.

Respectfully,

John Vellardita, Executive Director  
Clark County Education Association (CCEA)

**Item A2, Ryan Russell and Robert Salyer of Allison MacKenzie Attorneys & Counselors at Law**

Madam Chair and Members of the Commission on School Funding:

We represent the following county school districts and their respective superintendents: Elko, Eureka, Storey, Douglas, Pershing, Lander, Lyon, Esmeralda, Lincoln, and Carson City.

As you know, on January 19, 2021, Governor Sisolak submitted his formal proposed budget to the Nevada State Legislature. As part of his budget, the Governor is recommending a phased implementation of the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan (PCFP). As part of that proposal, our general understanding is that only state revenues will be distributed into the new PCFP. Local revenues will be retained at the local level for the upcoming biennium. Thus, full implementation of the PCFP would be delayed until the 2023-2025 biennium under the Governor's proposed budget.

The Governor's budget appropriately recognizes the uncertainty and economic peril caused by the pandemic, and thus seeks to eliminate the harm that full, immediate implementation of the PCFP would cause to school districts. The phased implementation approach, although preferable to full implementation, would unfortunately remove any benefit of the PCFP for *all* school districts in the State.

Under the suggested phased implementation, districts would be locked into their hold harmless numbers from *this* biennium. Due to the pandemic, these amounts would not properly reflect, or would understate, the needs of each district. In addition, phased implementation could have a significantly negative impact on school districts if local revenues do not make up the difference between state allocated funding and the actual need of the school district. Moreover, it will be very difficult for school districts to properly budget and forecast staffing and service levels using Covid-affected revenue projections.

Thus, we would request that the Commission retract its recommendation to move forward with full implementation and instead replace it with a recommendation to maintain the status quo. No funding allocation changes should be made in Nevada until the 2023-2025 biennium. This would ensure that school districts are properly funded and maintain their ability to receive statewide guarantees should local revenues decline. Indeed, a full delay is not only consistent with the Governor's directive, but also better protects the districts from financial harm.

As always, we appreciate the Commission's time and attention to these pressing and ever-evolving issues. The school districts look forward to working with the Commission and are open and available for discussions about any of the aforementioned issues.

Sincerely,

Ryan D. Russell, Esq.   Robert M. Salyer, Esq.

**Item A3, Beth Martin**

Good Afternoon,

I am writing to you regarding SB543, more specifically the cost of living calculation that was done for Washoe County. I am a concerned parent and community member regarding your findings because cost of living in Washoe is not as low as was found in the calculation. It has actually been stated that cost of living in Washoe is one of the highest in the state. I am hoping that this is something that can be revisited and discussed in your meeting today and in March. The current calculation would have us in a hold harmless state for multiple years which will in fact do more harm to our already underfunded education system in the state. I believe strongly in a well funded public education system because it benefits everyone in our state.

Thank you for taking the time to reconsider and share my message with the appropriate people regarding the cost of living calculation.

Respectfully,

Beth Martin  
Parent and Community member of Washoe County

## **Item A4, Nevada State Education Association**

The Nevada State Education Association has been the voice of Nevada educators for over 120 years.

Since the introduction of SB543, NSEA has expressed our concern about the new funding plan at every opportunity. Despite being an active participant in the development of SB178 during the 2017 Legislative Session and sitting on the Funding Study Work Group, NSEA was shut out of the process of developing SB543 during the 2019 Session. Our first chance to see language did not come until the 99th day, and what was called that session's most important legislation received only a single public hearing. NSEA testified in force, raising numerous policy issues. Despite active educator voice denied representation on the Commission on School Funding, NSEA has appeared and/or submitted written testimony at each meeting of this Commission, with numerous educators from across the state also weighing in. Unfortunately, over a year and a half of meetings, this Commission failed to substantively address a single concern we raised, as if the voice of educators does not matter when deciding how to fund schools in Nevada.

The policy concerns expressed by NSEA over the last two years stand—the lack of educator voice; no new revenue for our chronically underfunded schools; watering down of our model education equity programs, Zoom and Victory schools; freezing and squeezing most school district budgets for a period of years; a giveaway to charter schools without increased accountability, and rewriting the rules of collective bargaining to make it nearly impossible for education unions to win a raise at the bargaining table.

Now with the COVID-19 pandemic other serious problems with the new funding plan have emerged. During the interim, the Funding Commission was charged with modeling the new funding plan alongside the Nevada Plan, but numbers varied wildly from month to month, projecting new winners and new losers at three consecutive meetings. Cuts of weighted funding during the Special Session called the move to the new funding plan into question. While those cuts have been slated for restoration, new cuts to class size reduction and per pupil funding are equally devastating. With his budget introduction, the Governor also proposed a phased implementation of SB543. Since this introduction, we have struggled to figure out the impact on districts other than another round of new winners and losers with this transition. We don't recall any contemplation of this proposal at any Commission meeting over the last year and a half.

While implementation of SB543 as designed is riddled with problems, NSEA is concerned that a phased-in approach could actually be worse. Numerous legislators at a meeting of the Legislative Commission's Budget Subcommittee raised similar concerns. Under the Nevada Plan, the state provides a basic support guarantee for every Nevada student, as required by the Constitution, currently over \$6000 per pupil. Under the phased approach local revenues are excluded from this calculation, lowering the state amount to under \$3000 per pupil. What will be the impact on our schools if local revenues are less than anticipated?

NSEA maintains it is completely irresponsible to effectuate a radical shift in the state's education funding formula amidst a global pandemic, especially as further general fund cuts are proposed for our schools. This is even more true with the late hour changes proposed by the Governor. Given all these challenges, we believe the only responsible course of action is to delay SB543 until after the pandemic, while we are able to work together on optimal funding and the revenue plan to get us there. Thank you.

**Item A5, Chris Coleman**

Good Morning,

I am writing to you regarding SB543, more specifically the cost of living calculation that was done for Washoe County. I am a concerned parent and community member. Regarding your findings, cost of living in Washoe is not as low as was found in the calculation. It has actually been stated that cost of living in Washoe is one of the highest in the state. I am hoping that this is something that can be revisited and discussed in your meeting today and in March. The current calculation would have us in a hold harmless state for multiple years which will in fact do more harm to our already underfunded education system in Nevada. I believe strongly in a well funded public education system as it benefits everyone in our state.

Thank you for taking the time to reconsider.

Respectfully,  
Chris Coleman  
Parent and Community

**Item A6, Katie Simon Holland**

Dear Commissioners:

On behalf of our members in the business community, we are aware that the cost of living calculation for the new Pupil-Centered Funding Formula resulting from SB543 has the cost of living for Washoe County grossly understated, and we would ask that the Commission place this very serious matter for review and possible action on the Commission's next agenda.

Some specific data to support our concern is as follows:

- Washoe County's median home price just reached \$500,000, which is well above Clark County and other areas of the state. How can a calculation of cost of living or cost of wages ignore this reality and show that Washoe has the lowest index number?
- The current calculation shows for example that Churchill County has a higher Nevada Cost of Education index than Washoe, Douglas or Carson counties. This assertion is clearly not valid on its face.
- The basis for these calculations is the American Community Survey (ACS) from a number of years ago. The survey data is very high level and is already outdated. We are doubtful the survey data is a valid basis for these calculations.
- This data isn't transparent, easily understandable or based on widely used national comparators. A better approach would be to use US Bureau of Labor Statistics' published cost of living data, which shows Washoe does in fact have the highest cost of living among metropolitan areas in Nevada.

We hope that you will address this serious inequity at the Commission's earliest convenience. An inaccurate calculation of Washoe County's cost of living index will have grave consequences for funding for the 62,000 students served by the Washoe County School District. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Katy Simon Holland

*Senior Strategic Advisor*

*Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada*

*EDAWN*

**Item A7, Janine Luciani**

Hello,

I am a parent of a high school freshman who has been in the Washoe County School District since Kindergarten. I understand that SB543 will be reallocating the way school districts are funded based on the cost of living in the community. There has been an error in the calculation of Washoe County's cost of living. The cost of living in Washoe County is not as low as calculated - in fact, it is actually more expensive to live here than in Clark County. Because of this, if SB543 passes, it will be devastating to the WCSD. I know the school district cannot afford any cuts to funding because even as it is, my son has had huge class sizes and limited educational resources provided to him for his entire school career.

Please revisit this calculation to ensure that we do not further deteriorate our already crumbling education system. I recognize that Nevada has historically underfunded public education, but please do not allow our legislators to believe they are doing something good based on an incorrect calculation.

Thank you,  
Janine Luciani  
Parent and Community Member of Washoe County

**Item A8, Dan Browley**

Hello,

I am writing in regard to SB543. I believe there has been an error in how the cost of living was calculated for Washoe County. This calculation affects me as a community member and a parent. I firmly believe that the cost of living in Washoe County is not as low as the calculation suggests. In fact, from what I have been able to find, in 2019 the counties with the highest cost of living were 1) Douglas County, 2) Washoe County, and 3) Clark County. This makes Washoe's cost of living one of the highest in Nevada, not one of the lowest.

I feel strongly that Washoe's cost of living must be revisited and discussed at every opportunity until it is recalculated. The current calculation will put our county into a hold harmless state for multiple years. This will cause immeasurable harm to our already woefully underfunded education system. I firmly believe that a properly and fully funded public education system is a benefit to everyone in our state.

Thank you for taking the time to reconsider the cost of living calculation for Washoe County in SB543.

Respectfully,

Dan Bowley  
Parent and Community member

**Item A9, Skye Snyder**

Good Morning,

I am writing as a concerned parent and resident regarding SB543 and the low cost of living calculation for Washoe County. This must be an error. I am a concerned parent of WCSD students. Cost of living in Washoe is higher than the calculation reports. Cost of living in Washoe is one of the highest in the state. I trust this error will be revisited and discussed in your meeting today and in March. The current calculation would have us in a hold harmless state for multiple years crippling an already underfunded education system in Nevada. A well funded public education system benefits everyone in our state. Thank you for taking the time to reconsider.

Respectfully,

Skye Snyder

**Item A10, Aimee Jacobs**

Hello,

I am writing to you regarding SB543, more specifically the cost of living calculation that was done for Washoe County.

As you know, the calculations that were done are an extremely important factor for determining funding for the students of Washoe County. It appears that there has been an error because the cost of living in our area is not low. It is the exact opposite of low. It is outrageously high!

PLEASE reconsider the calculations that have been made. The students and families of WC are counting on you to get this right!

Nevada's education system is already greatly underfunded. We cannot afford to get this wrong. A well-funded public education system benefits EVERYONE in our state!

Thank you for taking the time to reconsider.

Respectfully,

Aimee Jacobs  
Community Member, Parent, Teacher

## **Item A11, Calen Evans**

Dear Commission on School Funding,

When SB543 was created one of its foundational elements was the weighted metrics placed on students across the state. The idea in principle is well intended. Let's provide additional resources to our most at-risk students. No one would argue with that. We need to do everything we can to support the children in our community who need it most. Being a person who has spent my entire adult life working with at-risk youth it is something that I personally feel very strongly about. The issue though is there is one huge flaw in how this formula was implemented. It was implemented with the idea that we should Redistribute the current funding we have and then address the overall lack of funding that exists. This method of implementation would indicate that somehow ALL of the students across our state aren't underfunded and under resourced and that's simply not the case.

Let's be very clear, every student and school district across this state is NOT receiving adequate funding. There is absolutely zero third-party studies that would say otherwise. We rank near the very bottom of every national funding metric for education that there is. These are not the opinions of individuals, these are the fact. By Redistributing funds prior to addressing the lack of overall educational funding we are taking the already small pie, that is not currently large enough to feed any of our students, any divvying it out differently. At the end of the day we're still failing all of our students. Because of this severely flawed idea we are forcing districts to fight over who's going to get what, even though there's not enough to go around in the first place.

Another huge issue is how the cost of living got calculated for each district, which strongly influences the amount of funding our schools receive. As a resident of Washoe County I'm Curious which metrics were used to deem Washoe having the lowest cost of living in the state? The average median housing price is nearly \$450,000 and the ability to afford housing is the largest factor that determines cost of living in an area. So how did that get decided?

How's the saying go? Feed a man crumbs long enough and he'll forget that he deserves a full meal. That's exactly what we've been doing with our school districts, staff, and students. They all deserve better and we need the leaders on this funding commission to put forth real recommendations to address SB543 and our flawed state education system.

Thank you,  
Calen Evans- WSCD community member

**Item A12, Angie Reeder**

Good evening,

I am writing tonight regarding SB543, specifically the cost of living portion as it pertains to Washoe County. According to the calculation, Washoe County is listed as having a lower cost of living that what is true. Washoe County has one of the highest cost of living in the state. Our median home prices are currently sitting around \$500,000....half a million dollars for a home that isn't elaborate or fancy. That certainly doesn't reflect the low cost of living that was found in your calculations. As a parent, this is concerning to me because I know the way the cost of living is set right now will drastically change funding for Washoe County. The education funding for our state is dismal at best. We are already underfunded and this current calculation would leave us in a hold harmless state for multiple years which will do more harm and further exacerbate the underfunding of education we already face in our state. I am hoping that this cost of living calculation can be revisited and reconsidered before any other action is taken. I appreciate you taking the time to reconsider.

Sincerely,  
Angie Reeder  
WCSD Parent and Community Member

**Item A13, MJ Ubando**

Dear Commission,

The math is wrong.

The cost of living calculation of Washoe County in SB543 is incorrect. It has been proven that the cost of living in Washoe is actually one of the highest in the state. The costs of this mistake can impact our already underfunded education system for years to come. As both a product and now a teacher of the WCSD, I am telling you that our students cannot afford to lose more, our teachers cannot take one more cut. Please revisit and correct this miscalculation before our kids pay the price.

Thank you,

MJ Ubando

**Item A14, Amy Bentel**

Good Evening,

I am writing to you regarding SB543 and the incorrect cost of living calculation that was presented for Washoe County. I'm fortunate that I purchased my home in Reno in 2012 because based on the current cost of living in Washoe county, I would be unable to afford a home even as an 18 year veteran Nevada school teacher. The cost of living in Washoe county is one of the highest in Nevada and my hope is that the calculation for our county will be reconsidered so our students and public education system are funded fairly.

Thank you,  
Amy Bentel  
Kindergarten Teacher  
Reno

**Item A15, Maggie Babb**

Good Evening,

I am writing to you regarding SB543, more specifically the cost of living calculation that was done for Washoe County.

The median price range for a house in Washoe County is \$600,000 as of now and the average rent has more than doubled since I moved out here six years ago. I, a teacher in Washoe and my husband with a good job cannot afford to buy a house in our community. We can almost not even afford the ever growing rent in our own community. And we have good paying “middle class” jobs. The cost of living in Washoe is not as low as was found in the calculation that was posted. Washoe is one of the highest in the state. This needs to be re-evaluated, and I am hoping that this is something that can be revisited and discussed in your meeting today and in March.

The current calculation would have us in a hold harmless state for multiple years which will in fact do more harm to our already underfunded education system in Nevada. I believe strongly in a well funded public education system as it benefits everyone in our state. Something needs to be done and I hope it will soon.

Respectfully,

Maggie Babb  
Community member of Washoe County

## Item A16, Clark County Education Association

SB 543 Commission Members:

The Clark County Education Association is committed to enacting SB543 as the new funding formula for our k-12 system. We are also committed to finding the revenue to fund the plan in this Legislative Session and beyond. To that end we offer the following for your consideration.

1. We advise the Funding Commission to make a request to present your work to the Senate and Assembly Committees on Education and Finance and Ways and Means. We believe there is a significant gap in understanding what the SB543 legislation is and furthermore we believe the work you have done needs to be shared with the Legislature so they understand when making decisions regarding this law.
2. We do not support the Governor's proposal regarding SB543 in the upcoming biennium. We do not support it first for policy reasons. We do not believe it is a sound plan to rollout the new funding plan but more of a fix on a budget short gap. We believe the proposal is anything but SB543 implementation. Second, we do not support it because the proposal underfunds our k-12 education system at a time when we should be investing in education.
3. On funding, we suggest that the Commission look at multiple approaches to funding SB543. We believe multiple sources of revenue dedicated to funding k-12 should be on the table. We also believe that the Commission could recommend a multi biennium plan of increasing revenue that correlates with funding the Pupil Centered Funding Plan to optimum levels over time. We would advise that the first six years of a plan invests primarily in funding the per pupil baseline.
4. We recommend the Commission look at the sales tax and property tax in tandem as funding streams for the PCFP. First, we agree with the idea of looking at broadening the sales tax to increase revenue i.e. to include services and a claw back on certain exemptions. We would also suggest looking at the Local School Support Tax which is a dedicated funding stream for our schools. Raising that Yi percent would bring in over \$300 million a year.

Second, we strongly advise proposing property taxes to fund education. It is more stable and sustainable revenue in the long run. It was up until the 1980s when the Nevada Legislature reverted to sales tax in lieu of property taxes to fund education. There is a symbiotic relationship between property taxes and our school system- positive or negative. Good schools improve property values. A report titled, "Using Market Valuation to Assess Public School Spending," issued by the National Bureau of Economic Research, found that for every dollar spent on public schools in a community, home values increased \$20. In other words there is a definite correlation between school expenditures and home values.

5. On optimal funding we recommend that be defined as meeting student performance outcomes to improve Nevada's education delivery system. This approach would focus on raising Nevada's k-12 education system from the bottom to say mid-range nationally in math, science, and reading. The most recent APA study can be used to help guide the Commissions' recommendations in determining the cost of meeting performance outcomes. That study identified what the resources are needed to hit key academic performance outcomes.

Finally, we want to share with you what we said yesterday. Our economy can no longer continue to be dependent on two industries. We must diversify and attract new industries. But we need an educated and skilled workforce to do that. Investing in education at this time for our State is critical. The pandemic has already cost a year of education for hundreds of thousands of students in our State. And they will never get that back. Nevada's k-12 system is the base of Nevada's k-20 education delivery system. We must invest in the base. Your recommendations must be incorporated into any discussion that lawmakers have regarding SB543 so that sound decisions and not budget short gap decisions can be made.

John Vellardita, Executive Director, Clark County Education Association (CCEA)

**Item A17, Lindsay Anderson**

Good Morning,

I am writing to you regarding SB543, more specifically the cost of living calculation that was done for Washoe County. I am very concerned about the calculations. I moved back home to Reno and have been working in WCSD for three years now, and after looking at my finances, and doing the math, I have come to find that I can live more comfortably on a teacher's salary in the Bay Area than I can in Washoe County. I will write that again for you to read once more...With the cost of living, low teacher wages, high rental and home buying prices, and the out of pocket costs of WCSD insurance, I am able to live a more financially profitable life in the Bay Area of California, than in my hometown of Reno, Nevada.

The education system is so underfunded in the state of Nevada that drastic measures should be taken to start funding it appropriately. I see our students hurting from the underfunding and lack of education appreciation every day and it is heartbreaking. What we are doing to the future of our state is abysmal and I beg of you to reconsider any cuts to funding.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Lindsay Anderson

## Item A18, Chris Daly

Good morning, Commissioners. Today I am testifying as an individual who has attended or watched every meeting of the Commission on School Funding and has actively engaged in the details of school funding in Nevada for the last 5 years, including serving on the 2018 precursor to this Commission, the SB178 Task Force.

Watching your meeting yesterday, many questions came to mind about the Governor's proposed "phase-in" of the new funding plan, with the most confounding one being *why*. Why did the Governor propose this "phase-in" of the new funding plan. Certainly, many serious issues have been raised about SB543 as written and many others have arisen related to the fiscal crisis created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Is the Governor's proposal related to these issues? Is the proposal designed to shield the state from responsibility to backfill a loss in local revenues for schools? And more importantly, what happens if a school district gets hit with a sudden loss of local revenue in the upcoming biennium?

This Commission was charged with modeling the new funding plan alongside the Nevada Plan during the interim, so decision-makers, including the Governor and the legislature, could make more informed decisions about the transition to the funding plan and school funding. While numbers have fluctuated over the past year, showing new winners and losers, what is the impact on each school district of the proposed "phase-in" versus the Nevada Plan and SB543 as written? If not this Commission, who has modeled the impact of this proposal? And if we don't yet know the impacts, when will we?

Proponents of SB543 hailed the new funding plan as one that will deliver greater transparency and equity for Nevada students. While this assertion has been debated, where is the transparency with this bait and switch? What is the impact of this "phase-in" on delivering greater equity for students who are most in need of additional resources.

Finally, as you discuss optimal funding today, how does the "phase-in", cutting the state's guaranteed per-pupil funding by more than half, from over \$6000 to under \$3000 per pupil, affect Nevada's pursuit of optimal funding. What may be the Constitutional issues with this proposal?

Perhaps the defining question we all need to answer—what is the state's commitment to Nevada schools and students?

Thank you.

Chris Daly

**Item A19, Brendan Wiebe**

Hello,

I firmly believe that a properly and fully funded public education system is a benefit to everyone in our state.

I am writing in regard to SB543. I believe there has been an error in how the cost of living was calculated for Washoe County. This calculation affects me as a community member. I firmly believe that the cost of living in Washoe County is not as low as the calculation suggests. In fact, from what I have been able to find, in 2019 the counties with the highest cost of living were 1) Douglas County, 2) Washoe County, and 3) Clark County. This makes Washoe's cost of living one of the highest in Nevada, not one of the lowest.

I feel strongly that Washoe's cost of living must be revisited and discussed at every opportunity until it is recalculated. The current calculation will put our county into a hold harmless state for multiple years. This will cause immeasurable harm to our already woefully underfunded education system.

Thank you for taking the time to reconsider the cost of living calculation for Washoe County in SB543.

Respectfully,  
Brendan Wiebe  
Community member of Washoe County

**Item A20, Charlye McKenna**

Good Afternoon,

I am writing to you regarding SB543, more specifically the cost of living calculation that was done for Washoe County.

My boyfriend is a realtor and we are in the search for a house for the next few months. The median price range for Washoe County is \$600,000 as of now. As a government employee and a realtor, we cannot afford to live in a beautiful new home, nor in an older one. The cost of living in Washoe is not as low as was found in the calculation that was posted. If we, with two fantastic jobs, cannot afford to live in our city, how can we expect our students families to? Washoe is one of the highest in the state. If you take a look at the median home value in Clark County, you will see a much lower price listed. This needs to be re-evaluated, and I am hoping that this is something that can be revisited and discussed in your meeting today and in March. The current calculation would have us in a hold harmless state for multiple years which will in fact do more harm to our already underfunded education system in Nevada. I believe strongly in a well funded public education system as it benefits everyone in our state. Something needs to be done and I hope it will soon.

Thank you for taking the time to reconsider.

Respectfully,  
Charlye McKenna  
Community member

**Item A21, Cindy Anderson**

Hello,

I am writing in regard to SB543. I am certain there has been an error in how the cost of living was calculated for Washoe County. This calculation affects me as a community member and a parent. I firmly believe that the cost of living in Washoe County is not as low as the calculation suggests. In fact, from what I have been able to find, in 2019 the counties with the highest cost of living were 1) Douglas County, 2) Washoe County, and 3) Clark County. This makes Washoe's cost of living one of the highest in Nevada, not one of the lowest.

I feel strongly that Washoe's cost of living must be revisited and discussed at every opportunity until it has been recalculated. The current calculation will put our county into a hold harmless state for multiple years. This will cause immeasurable harm to our already woefully underfunded education system. I firmly believe that a properly and fully funded public education system is a benefit to everyone in our state.

Thank you for taking the time to reconsider the cost of living calculation for Washoe County in SB543.

For reference here is one article:

<https://patch.com/nevada/reno/washoe-county-pricier-nevadas-two-large-counties>

Respectfully,

Cindy Anderson

Parent and Community member of Washoe County

**Item A22, Dana Hamilton**

Good Morning,

I am writing to you regarding SB543, more specifically the cost of living calculation that was done for Washoe County. I am a concerned community member regarding your findings because cost of living in Washoe is not as low as was found in the calculation. It has actually been stated that cost of living in Washoe is one of the highest in the state. I am hoping that this is something that can be revisited and discussed in your meeting today and in March. The current calculation would have us in a hold harmless state for multiple years which will in fact do more harm to our already underfunded education system in Nevada. I believe strongly in a well funded public education system as it benefits everyone in our state.

Thank you for taking the time to reconsider.

Respectfully,  
Dana Hamilton

**Item A23, Elizabeth Cadigan**

Good Afternoon,

I am writing to you regarding SB543, more specifically the cost of living calculation that was done for Washoe County. The cost of living in Washoe is not as low as was found in the calculation- It has been stated that cost of living in Washoe is one of the highest in the state. The current calculation would put Washoe County in a hold harmless situation for multiple years which as a result, will do more harm to our already underfunded education system in Nevada. I believe strongly in a well funded public education system as it benefits everyone in our state. As a concerned educator and community member, I urge you to reconsider this calculation.

Respectfully,

Elizabeth Cadigan

Teacher and Community member of Washoe County

**Item A24, Jacqueline Wiebe**

Hello,

I firmly believe that a properly and fully funded public education system is a benefit to everyone in our state.

I am writing in regard to SB543. I believe there has been an error in how the cost of living was calculated for Washoe County. This calculation affects me as a community member. I firmly believe that the cost of living in Washoe County is not as low as the calculation suggests. In fact, from what I have been able to find, in 2019 the counties with the highest cost of living were 1) Douglas County, 2) Washoe County, and 3) Clark County. This makes Washoe's cost of living one of the highest in Nevada, not one of the lowest.

I feel strongly that Washoe's cost of living must be revisited and discussed at every opportunity until it is recalculated. The current calculation will put our county into a hold harmless state for multiple years. This will cause immeasurable harm to our already woefully underfunded education system.

Thank you for taking the time to reconsider the cost of living calculation for Washoe County in SB543.

Respectfully,  
Jacqueline Wiebe  
Community member of Washoe County

**Item A25, Jamie Vaughn**

Good Afternoon,

I am writing to you regarding SB543, more specifically the cost of living calculation that was done for Washoe County. I am a VERY concerned community member and grandparent who finds that the cost of living calculations showing that Washoe County is as low as stated is incorrect. Cost of living in Washoe is FAR higher than stated, which is concerning, especially because of how it will affect public education.

I am hopeful that you can adjust your discussion in your upcoming meetings to reflect an understanding about how this current calculation, which is incorrect, will affect our public education system in Nevada, which is ALREADY dangerously underfunded.

A well funded education system is THE most important to me and our youth. I hope that you can take the time to reconsider these calculations and adjust accordingly.

Respectfully,  
Jamie Vaughn  
Grandparent and Community member of Washoe County

**Item A26, Jessica Conine**

Good morning,

I am a parent and community member of beautiful Washoe County. Though I wasn't born here, I've lived in Washoe County for 21 years. In that time, the cost of living has increased, most notably in the last few years. I'm writing today in regard to SB543, specifically the cost of living calculated for Washoe County. I believe the assignment of "low" is erroneous or our-of-date. This calculation affects me as a community member and as a parent, and most notably my school-aged children, as it impacts the funding their schools receive.

Please recalculate Washoe County's cost of living to insure it is accurate and current. The present calculation will put our county into a hold harmless state for multiple years, limiting funding to our education system. I firmly believe that a properly and fully funded public education system is a benefit to everyone in our state.

Thank you for taking the time to reconsider the cost of living calculation for Washoe County in SB543.

Respectfully,  
Jessica Conine  
Parent and Community member of Washoe County

**Item A27, Joy Anhold**

To all concerned about our students,

I am writing to you regarding SB543, more specifically the cost of living calculation that was done for Washoe County. I am a concerned parent and community member that argues that your findings of the cost of living in Washoe County is much higher than what was found in the original calculation. Actually it has been stated that the cost of living in Washoe County is one of the highest in the state. I am emphasizing these calculations should consequently be revisited and discussed in your meetings today and in March. Furthermore, current calculations would put us in a dangerous hold harmless state for multiple years which will in fact do more undesirable harm to our already underfunded education system in Nevada. Significant funding of our public education system will benefit everyone in our state. It is evident creating students capable of jobs in the technology and trade fields is crucial to Nevada's economy.

Thank you for taking the time to reconsider.

Respectfully,

Joy Anhold

Parent and Community member of Washoe County

**Item A28, Kristen De Haan**

Hello,

I am writing in regard to SB543. I believe there has been an error in how the cost of living was calculated for Washoe County. This calculation affects me as a community member and a parent. I firmly believe that the cost of living in Washoe County is not as low as the calculation suggests. In fact, from what I have been able to find, in 2019 the counties with the highest cost of living were 1) Douglas County, 2) Washoe County, and 3) Clark County. This makes Washoe's cost of living one of the highest in Nevada, not one of the lowest.

I feel strongly that Washoe's cost of living must be revisited and discussed at every opportunity until it is recalculated. The current calculation will put our county into a hold harmless state for multiple years. This will cause immeasurable harm to our already woefully underfunded education system. I firmly believe that a properly and fully funded public education system is a benefit to everyone in our state.

Thank you for taking the time to reconsider the cost of living calculation for Washoe County in SB543.

Respectfully,

Kristen De Haan

Parent and Community member of Washoe County

**Item A29, Lauren Proffitt**

Good Evening,

I am writing to you regarding SB543, more specifically the cost of living calculation that was done for Washoe County. I am a concerned teacher and community member regarding your findings because the cost of living in Washoe County is not as low as was found in the calculation. It has actually been stated that the cost of living in Washoe is one of the highest in the state. I am hoping that this is something that can be revisited and discussed in your meeting tomorrow (February 5th) and in March. The current calculation would have us in a hold harmless state for multiple years, which will do more harm to our already underfunded education system in Nevada. I believe strongly in a well-funded public education system as it benefits everyone in our state. Thank you for taking the time to reconsider.

Respectfully,  
Lauren Proffitt

**Item A30, Mark Proffitt**

Good Evening,

I am writing to you regarding SB543, more specifically the cost of living calculation that was done for Washoe County. I am a concerned community member regarding your findings because the cost of living in Washoe County is not as low as was found in the calculation. It has actually been stated that the cost of living in Washoe is one of the highest in the state. I am hoping that this is something that can be revisited and discussed in your meeting tomorrow (February 5th) and in March. The current calculation would have us in a hold harmless state for multiple years, which will do more harm to our already underfunded education system in Nevada. I believe strongly in a well-funded public education system as it benefits everyone in our state.

Thank you for taking the time to reconsider.

Respectfully,  
Mark Proffitt

**Item A31, Mary Proffitt**

Good Evening,

I am writing to you regarding SB543, more specifically the cost of living calculation that was done for Washoe County. I am a concerned community member regarding your findings because the cost of living in Washoe County is not as low as was found in the calculation. It has actually been stated that the cost of living in Washoe is one of the highest in the state. I am hoping that this is something that can be revisited and discussed in your meeting tomorrow (February 5th) and in March. The current calculation would have us in a hold harmless state for multiple years, which will do more harm to our already underfunded education system in Nevada. I believe strongly in a well-funded public education system as it benefits everyone in our state.

Thank you for taking the time to reconsider.

Respectfully,  
Mary J. Proffitt

**Item A32, Rachel Fisher**

Dear Commission on School Funding,

I am writing to you not only as an elementary educator, but as a concerned citizen of Washoe County, in regards to SB543 and the cost of living calculation that was completed for Washoe County.

The cost of living in Washoe that was calculated is NOT an accurate representation of the current living cost being experienced by the community--which in actuality is one of the highest costs of living in the state of Nevada.

I strongly urge you to revisit this calculation error in order to have a realistic representation of living cost in Washoe as you begin discussing this bill in your meeting today and in March. The city in Washoe County I reside in--Reno--has home prices that are 7% higher than the national average with the cost of building a new home among the highest in the country, transportation expenses such as gas and bus fare that are 13% higher than the national average, and despite its smaller size has rental prices that average at least \$300 more than those in Las Vegas.

The current calculation would have an extremely detrimental effect on the funding provided per student in Washoe County Schools for years to come--a district in Nevada that is already one of the most underfunded.

Please take the time to reconsider the current calculation for Washoe County, and delay funding formula SB543 until these issues can be sufficiently addressed.

Thank you for your time,  
Rachel Fisher  
Teacher and Citizen of Washoe County

**Item A33, Renee Fox**

Good Afternoon,

I am writing to you regarding SB543, more specifically the cost of living calculation that was done for Washoe County. I am a concerned parent and community member regarding your findings because cost of living in Washoe is not as low as was found in the calculation. It has actually been stated that cost of living in Washoe is one of the highest in the state. I am hoping that this is something that can be revisited and discussed in your meeting today and in March.

The current calculation would have us in a hold harmless state for multiple years which will in fact do more harm to our already underfunded education system in Nevada. I believe strongly in a well funded public education system as it benefits everyone in our state.

Thank you for taking the time to reconsider.

Respectfully,

Renee Fox

Parent and Community member of Washoe County

**Item A34, Robyn Donavon**

Good Afternoon,

I am writing to you regarding SB543, more specifically the cost of living calculation that was done for Washoe County. I am a concerned community member contacting you regarding your findings because cost of living in Washoe is not as low as was found in the calculation. It has actually been stated that cost of living in Washoe is one of the highest in the state. I am hoping that this is something that can be revisited and discussed in your meeting today and in March. The current calculation would have us in a hold harmless state for multiple years which will in fact do more harm to our already underfunded education system in Nevada. I believe strongly in a well funded public education system as it benefits everyone in our state.

Thank you for taking the time to reconsider.

Respectfully,  
Robyn Donavon  
Community Member of Washoe County

**Item A35, Stephanie Segal**

Greetings,

I am writing in regards to SB543, and I am gravely concerned with your inaccurate calculation with the cost of living in Washoe. Cost of living in Washoe County is one of the highest in the state. It's imperative this is discussed and revised in your meeting today. We cannot afford to continually underfund the education system in Nevada. I believe strongly in a well funded public education system that benefits ALL citizens in Nevada, and for future generations to come.

Sincerely,  
Stephanie Segal  
Native Nevadan

**Item A36, Tim Wiebe**

Hello,

I firmly believe that a properly and fully funded public education system is a benefit to everyone in our state.

I am writing in regard to SB543. I believe there has been an error in how the cost of living was calculated for Washoe County. This calculation affects me as a community member. I firmly believe that the cost of living in Washoe County is not as low as the calculation suggests. In fact, from what I have been able to find, in 2019 the counties with the highest cost of living were 1) Douglas County, 2) Washoe County, and 3) Clark County. This makes Washoe's cost of living one of the highest in Nevada, not one of the lowest.

I feel strongly that Washoe's cost of living must be revisited and discussed at every opportunity until it is recalculated. The current calculation will put our county into a hold harmless state for multiple years. This will cause immeasurable harm to our already woefully underfunded education system.

Thank you for taking the time to reconsider the cost of living calculation for Washoe County in SB543.

Respectfully,

Tim Wiebe

Community member of Washoe County

**Item A37, Ty Martin**

As a parent raising three children in the Washoe County Public School system I am in disagreement with the cost of living calculation as is written in SB543. This calculation will negatively impact children in our community by reducing funding for k12 public schools. I have lived in Washoe County since 1992 and I do not believe that the cost of living here is as low as the calculation suggests, The cost of living in Washoe County in that time and particularly in the most recent years has increased dramatically; This is something that must be revisited and discussed until it is an accurate reflection of our local economy. The current calculation will put our county into a hold harmless state for years. A properly funded public education system benefits our entire state, the current calculation will cause tremendous harm to our underfunded education system.

Please reconsider the cost of living calculation for Washoe County in SB543.

Thank you.

Ty Martin

Washoe County Parent and Resident

**Item A38, Vicki Bowley**

Hello,

I am writing in regard to SB543. I believe there has been an error in how the cost of living was calculated for Washoe County. This calculation affects me as a community member and a parent. I firmly believe that the cost of living in Washoe County is not as low as the calculation suggests. In fact, from what I have been able to find, in 2019 the counties with the highest cost of living were 1) Douglas County, 2) Washoe County, and 3) Clark County. This makes Washoe's cost of living one of the highest in Nevada, not one of the lowest. I feel strongly that Washoe's cost of living must be revisited and discussed at every opportunity until it is recalculated. The current calculation will put our county into a hold harmless state for multiple years. This will cause immeasurable harm to our already woefully underfunded education system. I firmly believe that a properly and fully funded public education system is a benefit to everyone in our state.

Thank you for taking the time to reconsider the cost of living calculation for Washoe County in SB543.

Respectfully,

Vicki Bowley

Parent and Community member of Washoe County

**Item A39, Educate Nevada Now**

Dear Chairwoman McCormick-Lee and members of the Commission,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment today on behalf of Educate Nevada Now. ENN echoes the concerns expressed by many commission members and earlier public comments.

The proposed changes to SB 543 to implement the Governor’s budget are problematic and may in fact be more harmful than the current Nevada Plan.

The Governor’s effort to divorce state and local dollars in SB 543 attempts to absolve the state from its constitutional responsibility to provide funding deemed sufficient for the operation of the public schools. It is the state’s responsibility to ensure sufficient funds and a “uniform system of common schools” – not local counties and certainly not the federal government. The assertion that the state simply *hopes* federal funds can fill local funding gaps is simply irresponsible and likely unconstitutional.

The budget proposal takes a step backwards in funding levels, accountability and transparency. It further introduces an equity issue by over-relying on un-equalized local funding, an issue states all across the country have been forced to address in response to equity litigation.

Though the Nevada Plan had many faults, ensuring vertical or fiscal equity was not one of them. We are disappointed in the Governor’s plan and what appears to be a lack of communication with the experts on the Commission.

While not perfect, ENN agrees SB 543 should be implemented, but for many of the components that are in danger of being removed under the Governor’s proposal. We sincerely hope commission members will get an opportunity to present to relevant legislative committees about their recommendation to implement the PCFP and the consequences of the Governor’s phased-in approach. Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Amanda Morgan, Executive Director

**Item A40, Angela Heard**

Housing in Washoe County is NOT NOT low! We are the highest in the state. Please do your research. Median house price is now 450,000. That is if you can find one to buy. Renting may be worse than buying. We are in a housing crisis that will become an education crisis soon because teachers won't be able to live in Reno/Sparks area. Please take 5 minutes and update your housing information to reflect reality. Because we live this everyday, and 5 minutes can change our life.

Angela Heard  
High School Counselor  
Mother of 4

**Item A41, Dallas Hulsey**

Hello,

I am writing in regard to the error in the cost of living calculation for Washoe County in SB543. I firmly believe that the cost of living in Washoe County is not as low as the calculation suggests. In fact, Washoe county has had one of the highest COL in Nevada over the last several years. From what I have been able to find, in 2019 the counties with the highest cost of living were 1) Douglas County, 2) Washoe County, and 3) Clark County. Here is an article from 2018 detailing the same. Washoe's cost of living one of the highest in Nevada, not one of the lowest.

I feel strongly that Washoe's cost of living must be revisited and discussed at every opportunity until it is recalculated. The current calculation will put our county into a hold harmless state for multiple years. This will cause immeasurable harm to our already woefully underfunded education system. I firmly believe that a properly and fully funded public education system is a benefit to everyone in our state.

Thank you for taking the time to reconsider the cost of living calculation for Washoe County in SB543.

Respectfully,  
Dallas Hulsey  
Community member of Washoe County