

No new answers to district concerns

By Nichole Davis
Sentinel-Voice

At what was supposed to be the last public hearing before the release of a final report on potential school district reconfigurations, a state subcommittee voted Tuesday to hold another meeting on the matter after a lengthy report from

their analysts.

At the 6 1/2 hour Tuesday meeting held at the Grant Sawyer State Building, members of the state Subcommittee to Study the Reconfiguration of School Districts requested additional data on four areas of concern, after encountering difficulties with proposals for changes in

the Clark County School District.

Should legislators decide to break up the nation's 10th largest district, it would be the first time such an action has been taken in the United States, analysts said.

Legislators wanted more information regarding site-based management of schools, dividing the district up along racial boundaries with a centralized funding mechanism, technology issues and alternatives to current school construction funding policies before they issued an opinion.

The request came after the analysts, Management Analysis & Planning Associates of Berkeley, Calif., told legislators they could not reconfigure the Clark County School District without sacrificing either racial or economic balance.

After examining preliminary data, MAPA Analyst Jim Smith said current proposals to break up the district along municipal boundaries, trustee constituencies and high school clusters could not work under present conditions, because they created problems in one of the two areas.

Under a municipal model, the district would be broken up along city boundaries creating new districts for Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Henderson, Boulder City and unincorporated areas.

It can not work because not only would Las Vegas have 100,000 students in a municipal school district, but North Las Vegas would have a majority minority district, Smith said. And that could possibly be grounds for a suit.

Proposed district divisions along current CCSD trustee boundaries fared no better, as the creation of seven districts still left funding inequities and ethnic imbalance.

"We tried either eight to 10 variants of this, but essentially it doesn't do a good job of anything, and it does a particularly bad job of balancing race and ethnicity," Smith said.

Finally, the geographic areas involved with a high school cluster (high school and feeder schools) model were too small to balance population or assessed values, he said.

Analysts also proposed an alternative of their own: break

the school district up along racial boundaries then pool money for capital improvements, which include the building of new schools.

By breaking the district up along racial and ethnic boundaries, future race-based litigation could be avoided and ethnic diversity could be maintained. Analysts suggested coupling this kind of division along with a new capital improvement formula.

Although Nevada has equalized operating funds, provided to districts on a per student basis, it is one of 10 states, which does not provide any money for capital

improvements to districts.

Analysts presented three funding options including the state's assumption of all building expense, the creation of a Nevada Capital Improvement Plan coupled with a school district-public-developer partnership and/or the issuance of state general obligation bonds for schools.

The first option was viewed as unrealistic, because it could possibly add about \$275 million a year for the state to assume all building expense, analysts said. That would represent 23.3 percent of the state's annual budget.

A more reasonable

alternative would be the creation of a suggested state capital-improvement plan that would collect monies county-wide and divide them on a per pupil basis.

Similar to its predecessor, the Nevada Plan, the state will assume only part of the debt while the school district, public and developers will be asked to meet the rest of the need.

A third alternative was reallocating the state's bond expense is problematic, because the Nevada constitution limits the general obligation bond expense to two percent of state's valuation, analysts said. And as of December 1, the remaining

(See Redistricting, Page 5)

CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT STATISTICS			
County Population⁴⁹			
1996	1,013,960		
2000	1,177,190		
School District Enrollment			
1996	166,788		
2000	229,672 ⁵⁰		
Ethnicity of Students⁵¹			
	1994	1983	
%White	65.1	75.5	
%Black	13.8	15.4	
%Hispanic	15.6	5.7	
%Asian/P.I.	4.7	2.9	
%American Indian	0.8	0.5	
Schools			
High		24	
Middle		27	
Elementary		127	
Alternative & special education		6	
Licensed Employees			
(full time equivalent)		9,399	
Student Achievement⁵² (Grade 4 percentile scores)			
	Reading	Math	Language
State Avg.	51	53	57
Clark	53	54	58
Student Achievement (Secondary)			
	Gr. 8 Read	Gr. 8 Math	
State Avg.	58	56	
Clark	55	61	
Student Achievement (Secondary)			
	ACT	SATV	SATM
State Avg.	21.2	429	484
Clark	21.0	432	494
Drop Out Rate			
State Avg.		9.6%	
Clark		10.8%	

⁴⁹ Nevada State Demographer, Nevada Population Information, June 1994; Medium estimates
⁵⁰ Clark County School District, Enrollment and projection Data, December 18, 1995. Represents district's estimate of most likely enrollment. The district's low estimate was 220,763 and high was 238,961
⁵¹ Nevada Department of Administration, "Nevada Statistical Abstract 1994 Edition"
⁵² Smith, David L., Analysis of Nevada School Accountability System School Year 1993-94, January 1996

Anti-violence mediation working in county schools

By Nichole Davis
Sentinel-Voice

Trainers, teachers, students and parents learned youth mediation techniques during a recent teleconference on teen violence. Though some of the policies are working here, attendees were eager to learn what's working in other parts of the country.

National experts highlighted a series of successful youth mediation programs around the country during the three-hour teleconference held at Channel 10 KLVX TV. At the North Carolina Center for the Prevention of School Violence administrators have found the use of an integrated approach to youth violence to be effective.

The state-wide office created a pyramid approach to handling violence in North Carolina schools and has put test-pilots of different programs throughout the state.

Uniformed school resource officers serve as role models in and out of the classroom. Law-related education is provided to students. Students are taught conflict management skills individually and have peer mediators for reinforcement.

At the school-wide level, test schools have seen a reduction in violence with the creation of Students Against Violence Everywhere chapters. Teen courts, where students are judged and sentenced by a jury

of their peers, are credited with lowering juvenile recidivism rates. And administrators have redesigned school facilities.

By training students, gossip and name-calling problems can now be resolved without teacher intervention, Elizabeth Domin, a 6th grader, said. Although the problems are the same, student now have "different solutions."

Although the concepts used in North Carolina may not work nationwide, a comprehensive approach was endorsed by experts, who also discussed how

percent, said Karen Kotchka, a school mediation specialist.

Fitzgerald Elementary School, Orr Middle School and Las Vegas High School were three schools who participated in this year's program.

At Las Vegas High School alone one administrator reported a 50 percent drop in the number of school-ordered Required Parent Teacher conferences due to behavioral problems, Kotchka said.

More than 40 sessions will be offered at four regional

Students are taught conflict management skills individually and have peer mediators for reinforcement

mediation programs can decrease youth violence in juvenile detention facilities and in the community at large.

"For schools to be safe, we also have to make neighborhoods safe. They're totally intertwined," said Linda Lantieri, national director of the Resolving Conflict Creatively program based in New York.

In the Clark County School District a pilot school mediation program was instituted four years ago by the Clark County Social Service Department. More than 1,700 disputes were resolved in the 24 schools which participate in this year's program. The program had an overall effectiveness rating of 92.6

conferences to be held around the country later this year. The two closest regionals will be held September 29 through October 1 in Houston, Texas and in San Diego, Calif. December 1 through 3. For brochure and registration information contact the Illinois Institute for Dispute Resolution at (217) 384-4118.

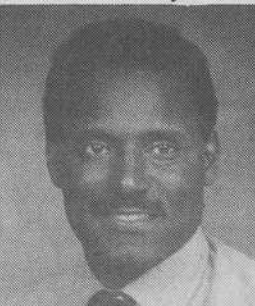
The teleconference also advanced the summer release of the Justice Dept.'s *Conflict Resolution Education: A Guide to Implementing Programs in Schools, Youth-Serving Organizations, Community and Juvenile Justice Settings* booklet. To receive a copy call the Juvenile Justice Clearing-house at (800)-638-8736.

Desert Chrysler-Plymouth
(on Fremont / Mojave near Showboat Casino)

OVER 500 CARS TO CHOOSE FROM:
Hondas, Chevys, Pontiacs, Fords, Mazdas, Cadillacs, Dodges, Toyotas, etc.

GET A CAR TODAY!
NO CASH DOWN - OK
NO CASH FOR INSURANCE - OK
NO CREDIT OR BAD CREDIT - OK
WE'LL MAKE A WAY

Accepting All Trades: Smashed, Crashed, Push, Pull or Drag In



457-4161

Ask For **CRAIG TOWNES**

2 YR. WARRANTY AVAILABLE ON MOST VEHICLES



R & B
RAP
POP

GOSPEL
BLUES
JAZZ

COMPACT DISCS • RECORDS • CASSETTE TAPES

1600 Las Vegas Blvd. S • Open 24 hours • 384-4040

PennyRich
National Communications/Phone Card Company In Las Vegas

EARN UP TO \$4,000 IN FIRST MONTH

Multiple Commissions & Bonuses
Flexible Hours Full-Time or Part-Time

Call Today 1-800-499-5261
Las Vegas Representative Frank Hawkins