



CLARK COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWS RELEASE

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What They Are Saying: The "Open Book" portal

Elected officials and business leaders applaud the District's transparent budget site

LAS VEGAS – Many of Nevada's elected officials praised the Clark County School District's new, transparent budget website, "Open Book." The District's superintendent, Dwight D. Jones, unveiled the site at the annual State of the District address. His goal is to make the District more accountable to the public and engage the community in a dialogue about how best to spend existing funds for a bigger return on investment.

"Despite hundreds of millions of dollars in state budget cuts over the past few years, the Clark County School District has resolved to raise the academic bar and improve graduation rates. We are already seeing positive signs. I am hopeful that the district's new website can help leaders in Nevada better understand how we fund education and where we can best use our resources to increase student achievement. I applaud the Clark County School District for its commitment to transparency." – Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid

"As we approach the 2013 legislative session and talk about providing some additional targeted funding to K-12 education, it is helpful to see exactly where taxpayer money is being spent in the Clark County School District. Taxpayers must have confidence that the money they invest in K-12 education is being spent wisely and is laser-focused on increasing both student achievement and graduation rates. This new online tool will give every taxpayer the opportunity to examine the District's budget." – Governor Brian Sandoval

"Transparency and accountability is a necessary part of a functioning government. The Clark County School District's new budget site allows every tax paying citizen to play the role of auditor and give instant feedback on areas that need attention or improvement. I hope more districts follow the example set by Superintendent Jones." – NV Superintendent of public schools, Dr. James Guthrie

"We know that improving academic achievement and increasing graduation rates among our students are key to attracting new businesses and creating jobs. Before anything else, a conversation must be had about educational funding accountability and specifically about how education tax dollars are being allocated and distributed. That the largest school district in NV receives \$8,200 per pupil and one of the smaller districts (Esmeralda) receives over \$17,000 per pupil is crippling to overall student success. I commend Superintendent Jones and his team for launching this online tool that will give taxpayers more insight into the District's \$2 billion budget. It will help frame the ongoing discussions we

are having in our state about where we can best invest our resources to improve the lives of our children and stimulate economic prosperity in our community.” – Carolyn G. Goodman, Mayor of Las Vegas

"This voluntary effort by the District should be applauded. This is where we need our critical friends to be helpful. Hard budget decisions have been and will continue to be made as we strive to better inform the community. We encourage all with helpful criticism to utilize the guest book feature on the site and submit their suggestions for cost savings.” – Clark County School Board of Trustees President Carolyn Edwards

"The Clark County School District has taken great care to detail how every dime of tax payer money is spent to ensure that students and their families receive the high quality education that will prepare graduates for the future. I believe smarter spending will help the District better use limited dollars to drive academic achievement and I stand behind Superintendent Dwight D. Jones' efforts to make the District more transparent and accountable to the taxpayers of Clark County." – Frederick M. Hess, director of education policy studies at American Enterprise Institute and~author of Common Sense School Reform

The United Way invests significant resources into Clark County schools to make a difference in the lives of the students. It's encouraging that the District is opening their books so the community can be an informed part of the conversation about how our schools are funded. Transparency in government is imperative, especially here in Clark County where so many students are struggling in the face of the economic downturn. We are pleased that the new leadership at CCSD is focusing on improvement and progress, showing everyone the tough choices that are being made in the face of higher expectations for kids. – Cass Palmer, President & CEO, United Way of Southern Nevada

"It is not often parents and community members get an opportunity to see exactly how their tax dollars are being put to work for students. We wish every school district in the country were as focused on fiscal transparency as Clark County. If so, we would be leap years ahead in understanding how we can better leverage funding to support student learning. Transparency only matters, however, if the data are used to help us better understand what students are gaining from the financial decisions made by school leaders. We hope CCSD will continue in its efforts to be good financial stewards of taxpayer dollars by linking spending to student outcomes data. We think this portal offers an excellent way to empower parents and we all agree that increasing parental involvement in the education of children is key to building stronger schools.” – Lea Crusey, Nevada State Director and Rebecca Sibilia, Vice-President of Fiscal Strategy, StudentsFirst.

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