

LAS VEGAS

Clark County School District operations 'out of date,' report says

By [Amelia Pak-Harvey](#) / Las Vegas Review-Journal
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The Clark County School District relies on out-of-date practices, operating with bloated staff levels and departments often working in silos with little communication with one another, according to a new report from the Council of the Great City Schools.

The report, which new Superintendent Jesus Jara requested in order to find deficiencies in the district, analyzed the office of the chief operating officer with site visits, interviews and other data.

“There appears to be a culture in the district of relying on out-of-date practices with no apparent sense of urgency to bring it into the 21st century,” the report states.

It found the district lacked business plans with goals and objectives. The district’s transportation department, for example, is considering introducing a new bus type to its fleet for several million dollars without a business plan available for review.

The analysis also found no updated long-term facilities master plan and poorly planned staffing. In some cases, the report said, supervisors oversaw only one person.

“The team found some key leadership positions held by employees who may lack the requisite experience, skill sets, or training to effectively perform the duties of the position,” the report said.

It also cited “excessive staff layers” in transportation and facilities.

But Michael Casserly, executive director of the council, acknowledged the district has significant funding issues that exacerbate some of the highlighted problems.

“The truth of the matter is that this district is badly underfunded,” he said.

Compared with other large urban districts, the district spends much less per pupil on operations, the report found.

“You did protect your teachers through all these budget cuts the best you could, but the cost was that you’ve really eaten your seed corn on the operation side,” Casserly said. “And pretty soon here it’s going to come home to roost.”

Some trustees expressed concern over the veracity of data in the report, along with consternation that they’ve heard all of these unresolved issues before.

Jara said district officials will address the deficiencies with a sense of urgency, noting hope is not a strategy.

“Obviously as a board it’s not our fault, but it’s our problem,” the superintendent said. “We, together as one, we’re going to fix this, and it’ll be a part of our five-year plan.”