



LOCAL. LAS VEGAS.

Superintendent Jara announces new programs, goals in first State of the Schools address

Gabriella Benavidez

Updated Jan 11, 2019 | Posted on Jan 11, 2019

LAS VEGAS (FOX5) -- Clark County School District Superintendent Dr. Jesus Jara delivered his first State of the Schools address at the Thomas and Mack Center Friday morning.

"We know we have work to do, and that is the state of our schools today," Jara said.

"But it's my intention to stand before you five years from now and tell you that the state of our schools is that we are the most improved district in America, thanks to the work of our team, our students and our families."

During his address, Superintendent Jara announced a five-year strategy draft plan he and his office have been working on.

The plan, called Focus 2024, aims to achieve the goals of the Board of School Trustees over the next five years:

- No more one or two star schools
- Reach 100 percent participation and performance for Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, dual enrollment and Career Technical Education programs
- Achieve a 90 percent graduation rate
- Increase college and career ready diplomas by 100 percent

Jara also noted on the need to improve recruitment and retention of school district staff, including teachers and support professionals like bus drivers. Superintendent Jara vowed to put "more adults" on campus to address concerns about large class sizes and to pursue funding to provide more "professional development."

CCSD officials said the district's top legislative priority is to fix the state education funding formula, which was originally created in 1967.

"Every time I do a public event, people ask me where the marijuana money went," Jara said. "I tell them that the funding formula is broken. It's like a leaky bucket. Sure, the marijuana money went in, but other money just went out. Let's put a plug in these leaks this session."

In presentation from the Council of Great City Schools given to the School Board of Trustees, it showed Clark County was one of the lowest-funded districts of all 74 urban school districts, according to CCSD officials.

"Not only do we lack transparency, but we're decades behind in areas like the efficiency of our facilities operations," Jara said. "I appreciate that the report gives us clear recommendations to address our challenges."

A new pilot program, also announced by Superintendent Jara, aims to provide a \$10,000 incentive to teachers and principals at eight at-risk, Title 1 middle schools. The program is a partnership with the Clark County Education Association and the Clark County Association of School Administrators.

The pilot program will also utilize federal Title 1 funds, which is set to begin during the 2019-2020 school year, CCSD officials said.

Jara also announced a new partnership with the Nevada System of Higher Education to offer more dual credit programs, reduce remediation rates and increase pathways into the workforce.

"This is a Pre-K - 20 partnership designed to support Nevada students from the time they enter Pre-kindergarten through whatever post-secondary path they choose," the superintendent said.

CCSD officials said that while the challenges ahead are large, Superintendent Jara is hopeful.