

For Immediate Release

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New cooperation aims to boost economy, create pipeline into profitable careers

CCSD, Workforce Connections, labor unions, businesses collaborate to ensure employers have the skilled workers they need to succeed

LAS VEGAS - The Clark County School District (CCSD) and Workforce Connections held a summit today with local labor unions, education leaders and businesses to develop new partnerships that will create a pipeline for students to enter into trade apprenticeships.

About 73 percent of Nevada high school graduates do not go to a four-year college or university, and the partnerships will provide more options for them to enter into stable, profitable, high-need skilled trade positions.

"This will be a game changer, not only for our children but also for our community," said Superintendent Dr. Jesus F. Jara.

"Today was a great day to see what our school district offers," said Clark County Commissioner Marilyn Kirkpatrick. "I hope that our parents in the valley get to see opportunity our students have with them."

"As the convener of the workforce development system, we support Dr. Jara's vision because the talent pipeline for apprenticeships begins in K-12," said Jaime Cruz, executive director of Workforce Connections.

"Today's summit represents the most progress made in decades to provide CCSD students with a pipeline from K-12 education into profitable trade jobs," said Tommy White, secretary-treasurer and business manager of Local 872.

"Labor stands with the superintendent on this," White added.

"We've never had this participation or involvement from a superintendent who sees the need for this," said Jeff Proffitt, business manager for Sheet Metal Workers 88.

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Participants outlined five action items to begin the process of changing perceptions about skilled labor and better connect the K-12 public education system with opportunities available in the Southern Nevada workforce:

1. Curriculum alignment to current needs in the industry
2. Refine messaging to provide students, parents, employers, educators and other community members accurate information about the benefits of apprenticeships to enter into skilled labor
3. Early exposure for students to trades so they begin to consider the possibility of skilled trade careers early
4. Licensing process for trades to instruct in the classroom so students can graduate with experience in skilled trades
5. Streamlining access to the classroom for trades to provide a first-hand perspective of the benefits of working in the skilled trades

Participants in today's summit discussed the stigma that students and parents sometimes have about entering into skilled trades. Some parents prefer for their students to go straight to college.

White remembers driving around New York City with his grandfather, who pointed out all of the buildings that he had helped construct. White hopes to make that same pitch to students in Clark County to join the skilled trades.

"It will give them a sense of pride that they are part of building Las Vegas," White said.

[Photos of the event are available here.](#)

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