

For Immediate Release

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Superintendent Jara announces key changes in cabinet

All positions will focus on ambitious goals set out in Focus: 2024 strategic plan

LAS VEGAS - Clark County School District (CCSD) Superintendent Dr. Jesus F. Jara announced several key cabinet additions today: Mike Casey as CCSD's new Chief Operating Officer and Christopher Bernier, Ed.D, as Chief of Staff.

Additionally, current Chief of Staff Jennifer Cupid-McCoy will be moving back to Florida to be with family, and Chief Communications and Community Engagement Officer Kirsten Searer has accepted another position in education.

Jara said the new cabinet members will be key in implementing the ambitious goals set out in CCSD's five-year strategic plan, Focus: 2024.

"Mike Casey brings a wealth of business knowledge to CCSD," Jara said. "His experience will help ensure that CCSD's operations are focused on our core business: student success."

Sound fiscal operation management is a top priority of Focus: 2024 to ensure operational effectiveness, and efficiency of school and district operational resources.

"Everything about our operation must directly support teaching and learning in the classroom," Jara said. "If the bus is late or kids aren't getting the nutrition they need, then they aren't getting the learning they need."

Casey most recently served as Vice President of Finance at Bellagio for nearly six years. He has held various positions with MGM Resorts International, including executive director of financial planning and analysis. His work experience also includes five years as a Financial Planning and Analysis Manager at New York - New York and a financial Advisor at Morgan Stanley.

Under this role, Casey will manage and supervise the functions in the divisions/departments of Food Service, Purchasing and Warehousing, Technology and Information Systems Services, Transportation and Vegas PBS.

This is a replacement position and will have no impact on the budget.

Dr. Bernier is a current Associate Superintendent for School Choice and an executive cabinet member of Orange County Public Schools in Florida. He currently oversees charter schools, alternative education, magnet programs, home

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education and the Orange County Virtual School.

Bernier has served Orange County students his entire career, beginning as a teacher. He has also served as Senior Director of Professional Development, responsible for the leadership pipeline and professional development in Orange County. He has experience as a middle and high school principal, and assistant principal. He is also a graduate of the Harvard Leadership Institute, and a commissioner on the Charter Schools Appeals Commission for the Florida Department of Education.

He will oversee Employee-Management Relations, Internal Audit, Diversity and Affirmative Action, and assist the superintendent with major projects and personnel decisions.

“Dr. Bernier has extensive experience serving at all levels of a school system,” Jara said. “He has a successful track record of implementing meaningful professional development, with results that were evident in leadership changes throughout the district. He also has led schools with diverse student populations to increases in student achievement.”

Jara said he supports the decisions by both Cupid-McCoy and Searer to leave the district. Both were instrumental in helping Jara in his first year on the job, he said.

“Dr. Cupid-McCoy uprooted her life for a year to help us develop a coherent plan to improve learning for the hundreds of thousands of students we currently and will serve,” Jara said. “I relied heavily on her as we worked to determine which areas of the district are working well and which areas need improvement. She also was instrumental in helping me hire key cabinet positions who will transform the district. I remain indebted to her for the legacy that she leaves behind.”

“Ms. Searer is a consummate professional communicator and leader who has advocated fiercely for our students,” Jara said. “She and her team successfully helped pass a modernization of the funding formula this legislative session that will reshape education in Nevada for a new generation of students. She is ready for her next challenge, and I look forward to working with her in future endeavors.”

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