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Testimony to the Senate Education Committee
CSSU/ CVSD Merger Process

Historical Perspective/ Readiness Factors

2003-2013: Focused work on moving toward a single, cohesive educational system

- Collective Bargaining Agreement
- Curriculum and Professional Development
- Supervision and Evaluation
- Executive Committee (School Board chairs)
- School Board meetings, retreats, shared goals
- LEAD Team (Principals and CO Administration)
- CULTURE (communities, districts, schools, principals, teachers)

The Merger Process/ Act 46 Experience

Study Committee - year of deliberation, data comparison, and public meetings

Equity and Autonomy

Fiscal Fairness (per pupil cost, bonds, neglected facilities)

School Choice

Transition

Governance: operating parallel board structures during the transition

Community buy-in: Equity and Autonomy Matrix; Facilities 3-5 year plan; CULTURE

Financial Considerations

Collective Bargaining Agreements

- Staffing (salaries and benefits had mostly been completed pre-merger)
- Teacher assignments/ school day schedules

Student Data Systems

*We did not promise big savings; we promised better educational opportunities for all of our students without giving up “autonomy.” We promised \$500K and realized a bit more than that (on a \$90M +/- budget).

Grant Money/ Incentives

- The real monetary incentive for us was the tax break over five years
- The grant money provided more than covered our expenses; this would be very different for a system that had not already done much of the work in advance of a merger
- Merged systems that combine currently unrelated school districts would need much more assistance and funding to support their efforts