



**NEVADA LEGISLATURE**  
**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**  
*(Nevada Revised Statutes 218E.605)*

**SUMMARY MINUTES AND ACTION REPORT**

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The fourth meeting of the Nevada Legislature's Legislative Committee on Education (LCE) was held on January 13, 2010, at 8:30 a.m. in Room 4412 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 2135 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. A copy of this set of "Summary Minutes and Action Report," including the "Meeting Notice and Agenda" ([Exhibit A](#)) and other substantive exhibits, is available on the Nevada Legislature's website at <http://www.leg.state.nv.us/interim/75th2009/committee/>. In addition, copies of the audio record may be purchased through the Legislative Counsel Bureau's Publications Office (e-mail: [publications@lcb.state.nv.us](mailto:publications@lcb.state.nv.us); telephone: 775/684-6835).

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN LAS VEGAS:**

Senator Joyce Woodhouse, Chair  
Assemblywoman April Mastroluca, Vice Chair  
Senator Shirley A. Breeden  
Assemblywoman Marilyn Dondero Loop  
Assemblyman Harvey J. Munford  
Assemblyman Lynn D. Stewart

**COMMITTEE MEMBER PRESENT IN CARSON CITY:**

Senator William J. Raggio

**COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:**

Senator Bernice Mathews (excused)

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT:**

H. Pepper Sturm, Chief Deputy Research Director, Research Division  
Carol M. Stonefield, Supervising Principal Research Analyst, Research Division  
Kristin C. Roberts, Senior Principal Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division  
Joi Davis, Program Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division  
Maryann Elorreaga, Senior Research Secretary, Research Division

## **OPENING REMARKS**

- Chair Woodhouse called the meeting to order and welcomed the Committee members, guest presenters, and the public.

## **PRESENTATION CONCERNING THE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSAL TO REVISE STATE AND LOCAL PUBLIC EDUCATION STRUCTURES AND TO REVISE OR ELIMINATE CERTAIN STATE EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

- Stacy M. Woodbury, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor, conducted a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation ([Exhibit B](#)) and explained Governor Jim Gibbons' education reform proposal. She said the proposal was introduced to Nevada legislators at an open-door meeting on January 6, 2010. Governor Gibbons is proposing to remove earmarks currently in statute and put more money into increased basic school support. The Governor's proposal would:
  1. Place accountability at the school district and teacher levels;
  2. Remove mandates and earmarks, including class size reduction and full-day kindergarten;
  3. Provide flexibility to school districts to decide which programs to provide at which schools;
  4. Eliminate collective bargaining at the school district level; and
  5. Allow school administrators to evaluate teachers based, in part, on student performance.

Ms. Woodbury said the Governor's Office was in receipt of numerous communications from the public expressing support for education reform.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Lynn Warne, President, Nevada State Education Association (NSEA), said the NSEA has always supported placing accountability at the school district and teacher level and encouraged parental involvement. The NSEA strongly disagrees with the Governor's proposal to remove mandates and earmarks for class-size reduction and full-day Kindergarten as well as the proposal to eliminate collective bargaining at the school district level. Ms. Warne said the NSEA also strongly disagreed with the Governor's proposal to eliminate collective bargaining, noting collective bargaining is an excellent and proven method for employees and representatives of the school districts to come together and deal with very complex issues.

- Lesley Pittman, President, Sierra Strategies, Reno, on behalf of the United Way of Southern Nevada (UWSN), referred to her written testimony ([Exhibit C](#)) and said that although the UWSN supports and encourages the concept of allowing school districts greater flexibility and control over how State education funds are spent, it would be a disservice to the children and the future of Nevada if it were done at the expense of funding for full-day Kindergarten.

A discussion ensued among several parents of students in the Washoe County School District (WCSD) and the Clark County School District (CCSD) regarding their opposition to Governor Gibbons' proposals to eliminate funding of full-day kindergarten and class size reduction.

**PRESENTATION ON THE GOVERNOR'S POSITION ON NEVADA'S PROPOSED APPLICATION FOR THE RACE TO THE TOP FUND (SECTION 14006, TITLE XIV, AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009, PUBLIC LAW NO. 111-5)**

- Chair Woodhouse stated this agenda item would not be heard.

**STATUS REPORT OF CURRENT AND ANTICIPATED ACTIVITIES BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CONCERNING NEVADA'S PROPOSED APPLICATION FOR THE FEDERAL RACE TO THE TOP FUND**

- Keith W. Rheault, Ph.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education (DOE), discussed the recent activities of the DOE related to the Race to the Top (RTTT) grant application. He noted the DOE staff has met with representatives of the CCSD and the WCSD, stating they started with school districts because participation by local education agencies is a key factor in the RTTT grant application. The DOE met with the districts to ensure they understood the requirements in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) for the RTTT Fund and what may need to be done to reform the State in particular areas related to education. The DOE was also seeking the input of the districts regarding new reform efforts to address the four areas set out in the ARRA. The next step for the DOE will be scheduling meetings with the remaining 15 districts to obtain their input and make sure they understand the requirements of the Act.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE RACE TO THE TOP FUND RELATING TO PROVIDING HIGH-QUALITY PATHWAYS FOR ASPIRING TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS**

***Status of Policies and Programs in Nevada Relevant to Eligibility Requirements***

- Dr. Keith Rheault, previously identified, gave a brief overview of some of the requirements relating to the primary point areas in the Great Teachers and Leaders section of the RTTT application. The first criterion is providing high-quality pathways for aspiring teachers and principals, alternative routes to licensure, or alternative

pathways for teachers and principals to be licensed. To meet RTTT criteria requirements, an alternative route to licensure must have the following characteristics:

1. Can be provided by various types of qualified providers, including both institutions of higher education and other providers operating independently from institutions of higher education;
2. Are selective in accepting candidates;
3. Provide supervised, school-based experiences and ongoing support, such as effective mentoring and coaching;
4. Significantly limit the amount of coursework required or have options to test out of courses; and
5. Upon completion, award the same level of certification that traditional preparation programs award upon completion.

Dr. Rheault stated Nevada currently has alternative routes to teacher licensure in place and can compete very well; however, the requirement is very specific in that everything contained in the alternative route for teachers also applies to principals, and currently, Nevada does not have any type of alternative route available to principals. To be eligible for the maximum points in this area, Nevada would need to propose and develop an alternative route for principals over the course of the application.

### ***Presentation on Alternative Routes to Teacher Licensure***

- Vernon D. Luft, Ph.D., Member, Commission on Professional Standards in Education, referred to his written statement ([Exhibit D](#)) and commented that the Commission has recently approved changes in the *Nevada Administrative Code* (NAC) that expand the availability of conditional licenses in Nevada. He then gave a brief overview of the alternate teacher licenses currently available in Nevada. Dr. Luft pointed out Nevada has had a conditional or alternative license in place for some time to enable school districts to hire teachers for hard-to-fill areas of instruction. The districts can apply for conditional licenses on behalf of those teachers. The teachers then have three years to complete course requirements to obtain their teaching licenses. One of the changes in the NAC now allows teachers who have completed an alternative program and hold a renewable license in another state to be eligible for licensure in Nevada. Dr. Luft explained that another change in the NAC allows for the acceptance of other forms of alternative routes to teachers' licenses, such as those programs offered through local school districts and the American Board for the Certification of Teaching Excellence.

Dr. Luft noted there is also the Business and Industry License for Career and Technical Education teachers. A person with a minimum of five years of experience in a trade, business, or profession, who wants to teach that subject area to grade 7 through adult

students, may apply for and obtain the Business and Industry License. In conclusion, Dr. Luft said that with the recent expansion of opportunities for individuals to obtain a conditional license in Nevada, it was his impression that Nevada is in a good position to meet the RTTT criteria for alternative routes to certification. Although it was not appropriate to speak for the Commission as a whole, Dr. Luft said it was his opinion that no further statutory or regulatory changes are necessary to accommodate alternative routes to licensure.

### ***Overview of Issues and Related Activities in Other States***

- Carol M. Stonefield, Supervising Principal Research Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB), referred to her January 7, 2010, memorandum addressed to the Chair and Members of the LCE ([Exhibit E](#)). She said the application for the RTTT Fund identifies one selection criterion as the extent to which a state provides alternative routes to certification. Ms. Stonefield then reviewed options for alternative principal licensure in other states.

### ***Presentations on Alternative Routes to Administrator Licensure***

- Dr. Vernon D. Luft, previously identified, stated that Nevada does not have alternative routes for the licensure of school administrators. He noted the Commission on Professional Standards in Education formed a task force three or four years ago to review the administrator licenses and found the requirements to be appropriate at that time. There were no recommendations made regarding a need for alternative routes to licensing administrators. Alternative licenses are normally thought to be for the purpose of filling positions for which there are personnel shortages. Dr. Luft shared the Commission has always been receptive to reviewing licensure requirements and making changes that meet the needs of today's changing education environment. If there is a need to revisit the administrator licensure requirements or introduce an alternative license, the Commission would accept such a challenge.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Steve Augspurger, Executive Director, Clark County Association of School Administrators and Professional-technical Employees (CCASA), said CCASA would like to work with the LCE and DOE on the development of alternate routes to licensure for administrators that can best meet the needs of students and staff.

- The Committee **APPROVED THE FOLLOWING ACTION:**

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MASTROLUCA MOVED TO SEND A LETTER FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION TO DR. KEITH RHEULT AND THE COMMISSION ON PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS, ASKING FOR A REVIEW OF ALTERNATIVE ROUTES TO LICENSURE WITH A FOCUS ON RURAL COMMUNITIES AND SCHOOL

DISTRICTS AND VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS. ASSEMBLYMAN STEWART  
SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE RACE TO THE TOP FUND RELATING TO IMPROVING  
THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL PREPARATION  
PROGRAMS**

(As directed by Chair Woodhouse, this item was taken out of order)

***Status of Policies and Programs in Nevada Relevant to Eligibility Requirements***

- Dr. Keith Rheault, previously identified, explained that the criteria for improving the effectiveness of teacher and principal preparation programs require a state to have a plan to accomplish those improvements. He noted that Nevada will be eligible and competitive if it includes such a plan in its application. The Reform Plan Criteria section requires that a data system be able to link student achievement to individual teachers and principals and be able to link the teacher's institution of preparation to the teacher.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE RACE TO THE TOP FUND RELATING TO IMPROVING  
TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL EFFECTIVENESS BASED ON PERFORMANCE**

***Status of Policies and Programs in Nevada Relevant to Eligibility Requirements***

- Dr. Keith Rheault, previously identified, said the effectiveness based on performance requirement is probably the most important section of the Great Teachers and Leaders portion of RTTT because it has the highest point value; however, Nevada does not have most of the required elements in place. The section primarily requires a state to accomplish three things:
  1. Establish a system that can measure student growth;
  2. Local Education Authorities would have to commit to revamping their annual evaluations to include student growth data as a "significant factor" in the evaluation of teachers and principals; and
  3. At a minimum, use the evaluation data for teacher training, recruitment, and promotion.

Dr. Rheault stated teachers have to be designated in three categories: (1) highly effective; (2) effective; and (3) not effective. The evaluation system that Nevada develops under this section would have to equitably measure the effectiveness of all teachers. He further commented that an evaluation system for teachers of noncore subjects will be difficult to develop; therefore, a lot of work is needed in that area.

***Report on Policies Establishing Linkages Between Principal Evaluations and Student Achievement in Other States***

- Carol M. Stonefield, previously identified, referred to her January 11, 2010, memorandum addressed to the Chair and Members of the LCE ([Exhibit F](#)) and stated that one of the selection criterion for RTTT is to consider the extent to which a state, with local education agency support, has a plan to design and implement evaluation systems for principals that rely on multiple measures. These measures are also to take into account data on student growth as a significant factor. Ms. Stonefield reviewed performance-based evaluations being used in several states as well as performance pay for principals being utilized in some individual school districts. She said that, because RTTT has included measurement of principal effectiveness among the selection criteria, there is some increased interest in the area of performance evaluation.

**CONSIDERATION OF THE RACE TO THE TOP FUND RELATING TO ENSURING EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF EFFECTIVE TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS**

***Status of Policies and Programs in Nevada Relevant to Eligibility Requirements***

- Dr. Keith Rheault, previously identified, stated this section of the application requires a plan for the equitable distribution of effective teachers in both high-poverty and/or high-minority schools. Nevada currently has in place a plan for ensuring the equitable distribution of highly-qualified teachers which has been approved by the United States Department of Education. With a few modifications, the plan could be used for tracking the equitable distribution of effective teachers and principals.

***Presentation on the Nevada Plan for Equitable Distribution of Teachers***

- Carol J. Crothers, Director, Office of Assessment, Program Accountability and Curriculum (APAC), DOE, referred to a document titled “Nevada Plan for Equitable Distribution of Teachers (EDT),” ([Exhibit G](#)) and noted that under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, states are required to have in place a plan to ensure that poor and minority children are not taught by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers at higher rates than are other children. States also must ensure that good-faith efforts are implemented to correct any identified staffing inequities. She explained that Nevada currently has a plan in place that meets those requirements. Ms. Crothers then reviewed Nevada’s goals; key strategies; and improvement rates for the equitable distribution of teachers in Nevada
- Assemblyman Munford asked about diversity classes for teachers who will be teaching poor and/or minority students.
- Leslie James, Title IIA Teacher/Principal Quality Grant Consultant, APAC, DOE, replied that during discussions in Washington, D.C., regarding the various elements of



a good plan for equitable distribution of teachers, the inclusion of diversity training is encouraged. She noted both the CCSD and the WCSD provide professional development in that area.

## **CONSIDERATION OF THE RACE TO THE TOP FUND RELATING TO IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHER AND PRINCIPAL PREPARATION PROGRAMS**

### ***Presentation on Plans and Targets to Link Student Achievement Data to Teacher and Principal Performance and to Link Such Performance to Teacher Preparation Programs Offered by Institutions of the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE)***

- Jane Nichols, Ed.D., Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, NSHE, said it is essential that Nevada have an effective database for linking student achievement data to teacher preparation programs. Dr. Keith Rheault, the DOE and the NSHE have worked very closely to submit a grant to the federal government to get longitudinal database funding in place. She noted the grant is essential because it will allow linking the teacher performance measures and the teachers to the teacher education programs.
- The Committee **APPROVED THE FOLLOWING ACTION:**

ASSEMBLYWOMAN MASTROLUCA MOVED TO SEND A LETTER FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION TO KEITH W. RHEAULT, PH.D., SUPERINTENDENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION, URGING HIM TO WORK WITH THE NEVADA SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS TO REVIEW AND PUT IN PLACE ANY NEEDED CHANGES TO IMPROVE NEVADA'S ACCEPTABILITY FOR RACE TO THE TOP FUNDS. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY ASSEMBLYWOMAN DONDERO LOOP AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

## **CONSIDERATION OF THE RACE TO THE TOP FUND RELATING TO PROVIDING EFFECTIVE SUPPORT TO TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS**

### ***Status of Policies and Programs in Nevada Relevant to Eligibility Requirements***

- Dr. Keith Rheault, previously identified, noted the section of the RTTT relative to providing effective support to teachers and principals requires a plan at both State and local levels to provide effective, high-quality professional development and feedback to teachers and principals. It is not required that the plan be currently in place.

### ***Presentation on Nevada's Regional Professional Development Program Activities Relative to Race to the Top Criteria***

- Pamela Hicks, Administrative Trainer, Southern Nevada Regional Professional Development Program (RPDP), referred to a report titled "Response to Legislative

Committee on Education Regional Professional Development Programs” ([Exhibit H](#)) and said it was important to note Nevada’s RPDPs are dedicated to student improvement at the classroom level. Each of the RPDPs provides teacher training and the Southern Nevada RPDP is charged with administrative training throughout the State. The RPDPs serve not only larger districts such as CCSD and WCSD but also include the rural areas. Ms. Hicks reviewed summaries of the following areas of professional development provided by the RPDPs:

1. School Improvement Plans: Designing, Implementing and Monitoring;
2. Effective Instruction: Supervising, Evaluating, and Mentoring;
3. Evaluation of Teachers: Observing, Conferencing and Writing Evaluations;
4. Curriculum Alignment: Examining Rigor, Standards Based Instruction and Student Work Analysis; and
5. “Great Teachers and Leaders”: Designing Systems and Support.

Ms. Hicks also discussed the RPDP’s biennium priority to support RTTT, recommended statutory and regulatory changes, and general recommendations of the RPDPs. In conclusion, Ms. Hicks stated that the Nevada RPDPs currently support several of the priorities of the RTTT and, moreover, the RPDPs can be the entities capable of supporting the grant, not only in the Great Teachers and Leaders component but other components as well.

***Report on Other Professional Development Activities in Nevada Relevant to Race to the Top Criteria***

- Melinda Martini, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division, LCB, referred to a document titled “Quick Poll Results Professional Development Activities in Nevada Relevant to Race to the Top Criteria” ([Exhibit I](#)) and stated that through the federal RTTT application, the State of Nevada must report how effective support is provided to teachers and principals. In order to gain insight into professional development opportunities for teachers and school administrators provided through the school districts, a survey was distributed to the school districts in December 2009. Ms. Martini then reviewed the information obtained through the survey.

***Report on Mentoring Activities in Nevada Relevant to Race to the Top Criteria***

- Joi Davis, Program Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division, LCB, referred to a chart titled “Mentoring Programs in Nevada School Districts Quick Poll Results,” which summarized the results of a survey regarding mentoring programs in Nevada school districts ([Exhibit J](#)). She said the chart indicates if there is a mentoring program in place; a description of the program; how the districts view the programs as meeting the RTTT selection criteria for Great Teachers and Leaders; how the programs are evaluated; and the cost and source of funds used for the programs. If a district indicated there was no mentoring program established in the district, the reason was listed in the chart. Ms. Davis concluded by noting that 16 of Nevada’s 17 school

districts responded to the survey. Nine districts have mentoring programs and seven do not.

- Assemblywoman Mastroluca asked Dr. Rheault to briefly review each of the five RTTT selection criteria that were discussed and indicate if Nevada shows strength in those sections.
- Dr. Rheault reviewed the five sections and commented on them as follows:
  - To receive the full 21 points under Providing High-Quality Pathways for Aspiring Teachers and Principals, a plan is required to be fully adopted and in regulation. If Nevada has a plan in the regulations prior to submittal, it could be eligible for all 21 points.
  - There is still a lot of work to be done regarding Improving Teacher and Principal Effectiveness Based on Performance (58 points). A plan needs to be established at the State level to be consistent across the school districts.
  - Nevada's plan for ensuring the equitable distribution of highly-qualified teachers can be expanded to meet the requirements under Ensuring Equitable Distribution of Effective Teachers and Principals, which and result in Nevada showing strength in that area.
  - Regarding Improving the Effectiveness of Teacher and Principal Preparation Programs, Nevada has applied for a federal grant to establish a student and teacher reporting system. If that grant is not awarded, such a system can be addressed within Nevada's plan, to ensure Nevada is eligible for the 14 points under this requirement.
  - Nevada could show strength in the area of Providing Effective Support to Teachers and Principals with the collaboration of local education agencies and the RPDPs to develop some consistent professional development activities Statewide.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- No one came forward under this agenda item.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 3 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Maryann Elorreaga  
Senior Research Secretary

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H. Pepper Sturm  
Chief Deputy Research Director

APPROVED BY:

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Senator Joyce Woodhouse, Chair

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## LIST OF EXHIBITS

[Exhibit A](#) is the “Meeting Notice and Agenda” provided by H. Pepper Sturm, Chief Deputy Research Director, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB).

[Exhibit B](#) is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “Governor Jim Gibbons’ Education Reform Proposal,” submitted by Stacy M. Woodbury, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor.

[Exhibit C](#) is the January 13, 2010, written testimony of Lesley Pittman, President, Sierra Strategies, Reno.

[Exhibit D](#) is the January 13, 2010, written testimony of Vernon D. Luft, Ph.D., Member, Commission on Professional Standards in Education.

[Exhibit E](#) is a memorandum dated January 7, 2010, from Carol M. Stonefield, Supervising Principal Research Analyst, Research Division, LCB, to the Chair and Members of the Legislative Committee on Education (LCE), titled “Alternative Routes to Principal Licensure.”

[Exhibit F](#) is a memorandum dated January 11, 2010, from Carol M. Stonefield, Supervising Principal Research Analyst, Research Division, LCB to the Chair and Members of the LCE titled “Principal Effectiveness Based on Performance.”

[Exhibit G](#) is document titled “Nevada Plan for Equitable Distribution of Teachers,” submitted by Carol J. Crothers, Director, Office of Assessment, Program Accountability and Curriculum, Department of Education.

[Exhibit H](#) is a report titled “Response to Legislative Committee on Education Regional Professional Development Programs,” submitted by Pamela Hicks, Administrative Trainer, Southern Nevada Regional Professional Development Program.

[Exhibit I](#) is a document titled “Quick Poll Results Professional Development Activities in Nevada Relevant to Race to the Top Criteria,” submitted by Melinda Martini, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division, LCB.

[Exhibit J](#) is a chart titled “Mentoring Programs in Nevada School Districts Quick Poll Results January 8, 2010, submitted by Joi Davis, Program Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division, LCB.

This set of “Summary Minutes and Action Report” is supplied as an informational service. Exhibits in electronic format may not be complete. Copies of the complete exhibits, other materials distributed at the meeting, and the audio record are on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau, Carson City, Nevada. You may contact the Library online at [www.leg.state.nv.us/lcb/research/library/feedbackmail.cfm](http://www.leg.state.nv.us/lcb/research/library/feedbackmail.cfm) or telephone: 775/684-6827.