



# **NEVADA LEGISLATURE**

## **COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT A STUDY CONCERNING THE COST AND AFFORDABILITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

**(Assembly Bill 202 [Chapter 150, *Statutes of Nevada 2017*])**

### **SUMMARY MINUTES**

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The third meeting of the Committee to Conduct a Study Concerning the Cost and Affordability of Higher Education for the 2017–2018 Interim was held on Tuesday, May 8, 2018, at 9 a.m. in Room 2135, Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4401, Legislative Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada, and to Room 102, McMullen Hall, Great Basin College, 1500 College Parkway, Elko, Nevada.

The agenda, minutes, meeting materials, and audio or video recording of the meeting are available on the Committee's [meeting page](#). The audio or video recording may also be found at <http://www.leg.state.nv.us/Granicus/>. Copies of the audio or video record can be obtained through the Publications Office of the Legislative Counsel Bureau ([publications@lcb.state.nv.us](mailto:publications@lcb.state.nv.us) or 775/684-6835).

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN CARSON CITY:**

Assembly Member Amber Joiner, Chair  
Senator Ben Kieckhefer  
David H. Sanders, Ph.D.

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN LAS VEGAS:**

Senator Moises (Mo) Denis, Vice Chair  
Senator Yvanna D. Cancela  
Assemblyman Chris Edwards  
Assemblywoman Heidi Swank

#### **COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:**

Alicia L. Contreras-Martinez

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT:**

Jennifer Ruedy, Senior Principal Policy Analyst, Research Division  
Asher A. Killian, Principal Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division  
Brody Leiser, Senior Program Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division  
Jennifer Ouellette, Program Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division  
Maria de la Luz Aguayo, Research Policy Assistant, Research Division  
Jan Brase, Research Policy Assistant, Research Division

*Items taken out of sequence during the meeting have been placed in agenda order.*

## **AGENDA ITEM I—OPENING REMARKS**

Chair Joiner welcomed everyone to the third meeting of the Committee to Conduct a Study Concerning the Cost and Affordability of Higher Education. She reviewed meeting protocol.

Chair Joiner stated she was appreciative of the public's input at the meetings. She called attention to the [Solicitation of Recommendations](#) and explained the Committee is seeking ideas and suggestions for possible consideration during the work session at the final meeting scheduled for June 4, 2018.

Further, she stated the Committee has an allocation of five bill draft requests for the 2019 Legislative Session and may also write letters to individuals and organizations urging certain action or include positional statements in the Committee's final report. Chair Joiner reminded the public of the May 18, 2018, deadline to turn in any recommendations.

## **AGENDA ITEM II—PUBLIC COMMENT**

Shannon J. Sumpter, Chair, Faculty Senate, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), noted her appreciation for the opportunity to testify during public comment, as she was unable to copresent later in the meeting with her colleague from the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) under Agenda Item VI, due to a Faculty Senate meeting.

She testified that UNR and UNLV aspire to be classified as R1 by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (Carnegie). The R1 classification denotes the highest research activity of doctoral universities. She noted that Nevada is one of nine states in the United States without an R1 institution and said it must invest in higher education and its educators in order to acquire an R1 classification for an institution.

Ms. Sumpter then called attention to the compensation study conducted by Gallagher Benefit Services, Inc. ([Agenda Item IV B](#)). She stated UNR, UNLV and its Faculty Senate, and the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) Salary Study Working Group oppose the list of peer institutions used by the Gallagher group to compare to Nevada's institutions because many are classified as R2 or R3 institutions by Carnegie.

Ms. Sumpter disclosed that the presentation had been adjusted to show comparisons of actual salary data at the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile, as opposed to the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile, at the request of the UNLV Faculty Senate. Further, she stressed that Nevada cannot keep offering salaries at the middle ranges that include R2 and R3 institutions if it wants to achieve an R1 classification.

Ms. Sumpter also called attention to subsection 6, Section 2 of [AB 202](#) (2017). She said that in order to "recruit and retain quality faculty that further programs of higher education and research," Nevada needs: (1) decent health insurance; (2) infrastructure and support that allow quality faculty to teach students, prepare workforce, and deliver groundbreaking discoveries; (3) livable salaries; and (4) rewards for hard work.

Ms. Sumpter continued by stating that NSHE's institutions are just beginning to return to prerecession funding levels, and faculties have suffered many losses due to stagnant salaries, retirement plan issues, health insurance with high deductibles, layoffs, buyouts, and hiring freezes. All combined, faculty is forced to work harder for less and only have two opportunities for salary increases: (1) promotion to associate professor; and (2) promotion to full professor.

She said faculty is grateful for the recent cost of living adjustment (COLA) increases, but they are not rewarded for stellar work or given an incentive for excellence. She said less than half of the administrative faculty have job descriptions that allow for fair comparison.

In conclusion, Ms. Sumpter asked the Committee to commit to an investment in access, affordability, and workforce development. She noted that the cost to address salary compression for faculty within NSHE is approximately \$90 million, and she implored the Committee to provide the necessary funding to do so.

Robert Manis, Ph.D., Professor of Sociology, Human Behavior, College of Southern Nevada (CSN), stated faculty salaries are not the cause of rising college costs. He pointed out that, for the past 40 years, the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) tracked the primary causes of increased college and university costs, which are: (1) excessive building; and (2) administrative and executive bloat.

Dr. Manis added that salaries are stagnant at midcareer and there is a tremendous amount of compression across the system of higher education. He said the situation is worse at the community colleges than it is at the universities because there are no ranks for community college faculty. He further explained that community colleges have only received a total of 9 percent in COLA increases over the last 10 years, including the increase expected next year.

In closing, he stated that compression is a critical issue, and he wished to clarify that contrary to the allegation in a letter from the Chancellor to the Senate Majority Leader, CSN is bargaining for a remedy to compression, not for merit or COLA.

Douglas A. Unger, Ph.D., Professor, Department of English, UNLV, stated the health insurance offered at universities in Nevada is substandard and noncompetitive compared to the benefits offered at universities in many other states. He stressed health insurance is a crucial component of faculty compensation essential to hiring and retention and to achieve an R1 classification.

Dr. Unger asked the Committee to consider that many teachers face thousands of dollars each year in health care deductibles and uncovered costs. He stated the funding for higher education has just recently caught up to the same levels as ten years ago; however, health benefits have yet to come close to catching up to what they were seven years ago.

Finally, Dr. Unger stressed that if Nevada does not improve benefits along with salaries, it will be at a competitive disadvantage in hiring and retaining quality faculty, which in turn can affect the quality of education and opportunities for students in Nevada.

Chair Joiner called attention to 35 letters of public comment, received prior to the meeting from Thomas Harrison, Ph.D., Chair, Faculty Senate, UNR, in support of faculty at the various NSHE institutions ([Agenda Item II](#)).

Amy Pason, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Communication Studies, UNR, shared information regarding her salary. Dr. Pason submitted a letter to the Committee ([Agenda Item II](#)) in which she described the challenges at UNR and stressed that to keep good and focused faculty, Nevada has to evaluate what it can offer to make the state become a place where people want to teach.

Daniel M. Valle, Ph.D., Associate Director, TRiO Scholars Program, UNR, called attention to the letter he submitted to the Committee ([Agenda Item II](#)). He stated his support for the testimony to be provided later during the meeting by Kent M. Ervin, Ph.D., Legislative Liaison, Nevada Faculty Alliance (NFA) and Dr. Harrison. He emphasized how vital the retention of faculty is and how much of it is dependent on competitive salaries. Dr. Valle urged consideration of faculty and staff funding. He pointed out the additional challenges for minority faculty. Lastly, he stated competitive salaries are vital to the recruitment and retention of a diverse faculty and staff.

### **AGENDA ITEM III—APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MARCH 22, 2018**

**MOTION:** Senator Kieckhefer moved to approve the minutes from the March 22, 2018, meeting. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Denis and passed.

### **AGENDA ITEM IV—PRESENTATION ON THE FACULTY COMPENSATION STUDY REQUESTED BY THE CHANCELLOR OF THE NEVADA SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

Crystal Abba, Vice Chancellor, Academic and Student Affairs, NSHE, testified in her capacity as the cochair of the NSHE Salary Study Working Group along with Brooke A. Nielsen, Esq., former Vice Chancellor and fellow cochair.

Ms. Abba gave an overview of the adjustments and updates to the NSHE salary schedules. She stated NSHE hired Gallagher Benefit Services, Inc., to do three specific things in the scope of its study:

1. Assess the market competitiveness of the current salary schedules for the universities, state colleges, and community colleges (does not include the School of Medicine, UNR);
2. Determine the costs by individual for placement in updated and recommended salary schedules; and
3. Request neutral third-party recommendations on adjustments to salary schedules.

Ms. Abba said salaries are considered competitive; however, there is a significant internal pay compression problem. As a result, the chancellor is working with the Board of Regents, NSHE, to develop a recommendation that will provide sufficient flexibility to the institutions to address compression while at the same time recognizing that any additional funding for salaries must be tied to institutional performance.

She noted the recommendation has not yet been formally made or adopted by the Board. Further, she stated the Board will consider a budget enhancement item for addressing the NSHE salary compression issue at its June meeting.

Finally, Ms. Abba called attention to the memorandum regarding the concerns from the faculty and members of the NSHE Salary Study Working Group ([Agenda Item IV A](#)).

Jim Fox, Managing Director, Gallagher Benefit Services, Inc., gave an overview of the compensation study of NSHE ([Agenda Item IV B](#)). He discussed how the information was acquired, adjusted, reviewed, and verified.

Mr. Fox reviewed the findings and analysis of salary schedule competitiveness and actual pay competitiveness, in which the study found that:

- Current salary schedule midpoints for most disciplines in business, economics, engineering, and marketing/management are below the market 50<sup>th</sup> percentile of actual pay, indicating possible misalignment with the market; and
- Current actual salary is above the market 50<sup>th</sup> percentile or competitive with the market for marketing, engineering, and law disciplines.

Mr. Fox went over the recommendations for the next steps of implementation. He stated that based on the WorldatWork 2017–2018 Salary Budget Survey, the projected trend for actual salary increase for education services in Nevada is 2 percent and 3.8 percent for structure adjustment.

For salary schedules based on market trends, Gallagher Benefit Services, Inc., advised:

- For any salary schedule that is below market, NSHE should adjust the range to match the market median;
- For salary schedules above the market by less than 3.8 percent, NSHE should keep the current range for 2018 and use the budget survey to determine the trend adjustment for next year; and
- For salary schedules that are more than 3.8 percent above market, NSHE should keep the current range and use the budget survey to determine whether an adjustment is necessary next year.

Regarding pay compression consideration, Mr. Fox said the study recommended NSHE should: (1) acquire a seniority-based method to determine the reasonable range penetration for each employee; (2) allocate employees in appropriate place within range and keep the in-range movement to avoid compression with experienced and newly hired persons; and (3) consider a review and readjustment of the range to keep up with the market if it chooses to have newly hired persons close to or above current employees.

Further, Mr. Fox brought up the following concerns with NSHE's compensation system:

- Content and structure of job descriptions are inconsistent and not updated;
- Five salary ranges covering over 3,000 employees is not sufficient;
- Inconsistent pay progression for employees within a range;
- Matches to the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources benchmark jobs are inconsistent and inaccurate;
- Ratios between state colleges and community colleges versus university salary schedules are not appropriate; and
- Salary comparisons include all disciplines.

Regarding those concerns, Gallagher Benefit Services, Inc., recommended NSHE should: (1) consider development of multiple salary structures for job families and levels of jobs; (2) continue using current specific discipline salary schedules; (3) expand the peer institutions to over 50 to ensure valid and defensible data can be collected; (4) improve availability of faculty market data across NSHE institutions; and (5) revise the method for calculating state college and community college salary schedules.

Finally, Gallagher Benefit Services, Inc., suggested two adjustments to the salary schedules: (1) review the salary schedule annually; and (2) conduct a market salary study every three to five years to ensure the salary schedules and employee salaries of NSHE and all institutions remain competitive.

Discussion ensued among Assemblywoman Swank, Ms. Abba, and Ms. Nielsen regarding specific discipline salary schedules.

Ms. Abba called attention to NSHE's [\*Procedures and Guidelines Manual\*](#), which has information regarding the specific discipline salary schedules.

Further discussion ensued between Assemblywoman Swank and Mr. Fox regarding perceived faculty challenges in relation to financial compensation and misalignment.

Assemblywoman Swank inquired about pay compression in relation to university performance versus individual performance.

Ms. Abba called attention to the history of merit—put together by Charles P. Milne, Jr., Ph.D., Professor, CSN—which was included in the memorandum ([Agenda Item IV A](#)). She noted institutions have only received merit twice in the past ten years. Ms. Abba reiterated that though NSHE has competitive salaries, there is a significant compression issue that is a direct result of not having consistent COLA and merit over time.

Ms. Abba and Mr. Fox confirmed the following points for Senator Kieckhefer:

- The cost to address pay compression is estimated at \$90 million per year, plus COLA, and any portion for merit;
- Implementation costs are annual;
- Implementation costs include all the faculty positions that could not be matched at the beginning of the study; and
- People are hired at a competitive rate but then they slip down the competitiveness scale with their peers and other institutions.

Discussion ensued between Dr. Sanders and Mr. Fox regarding the method used to choose peer institutions for the study.

To avoid pay compression or diminish its recurrence, Mr. Fox recommended setting aside a small amount of money for COLA and another portion for merit or performance salary. He said that would move people through the salary schedule at a rate consistent with their performance over time.

There was discussion between Chair Joiner and Ms. Abba regarding the best practice in moving an employee along within his or her rank. Ms. Abba noted: (1) because there is no compensation philosophy in place, NSHE has had to rely on the state for funding; and (2) prior to the recession in 2008, NSHE was consistently receiving funds from the state for COLA or merit increase.

Senator Kieckhefer requested information regarding how professional merit has been reflected within NSHE state-supported operating budgets in the past when it was funded.

Brody Leiser, previously identified, stated that professional merit and the related fringe benefit had a specific expenditure general ledger number associated with it, so it was a specific line item in the *Executive Budget*.

Subsequent to the meeting, Mr. Leiser submitted a memorandum ([Agenda Item IV C](#)), which offers more information regarding previous requests for an accounting of professional merit.

Chair Joiner, Ms. Abba, and Mr. Fox discussed various study methods. Ms. Abba clarified that NSHE is in the process of acquiring another purchase order with Gallagher Benefit Services, Inc., to conduct another salary study that will focus on the aspirational peer lists submitted by the universities.



In response to a question from Senator Cancela, Ms. Nielsen described the process used to develop the salary schedules.

## **AGENDA ITEM V—OVERVIEW OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES RELATED TO MERIT AND STIPEND AWARD PRACTICES**

Christine Casey, Senior Director, Human Resources, NSHE, gave a brief overview of NSHE merit and stipends ([Agenda Item V A-1](#)). She referenced individual merit distribution policies and procedures developed by each campus ([Agenda Item V A-2](#)).

Chair Joiner questioned whether a request for merit was included in the budget submitted by the Board of Regents for the past two biennia. If the request had been made, she asked: (1) how much was requested, and (2) whether it was included in the *Executive Budget* request.

Brody Leiser, previously identified, shared the request had been made and included in the Board of Regents' approved budget; however, it was not included in the *Executive Budget*, and it was not funded by the Legislature. He explained the Office of the Governor had compared the professional divisions within NSHE to the unclassified positions in state service, and because unclassified positions were not given a merit or step increase, the Governor was of the opinion that NSHE's professional positions should be treated equally.

In response to Senator Kieckhefer's question regarding NSHE's budget request, Mr. Leiser explained the requested budget was 2.5 percent in the first year of the biennium with an additional 2.5 percent in the second year of the biennium.

Discussion ensued between Dr. Sanders and Mr. Leiser regarding the Governor's comparison of professional divisions within NSHE to the unclassified positions in state service.

Regarding the aforementioned 2.5 percent merit calculation, discussion ensued between Assemblyman Edwards, Mr. Leiser, and Heidi Haartz, Assistant Budget Director, Department of Finance, NSHE. Ms. Haartz offered to provide information about the actual dollar value that was recommended for merit versus what was excluded from the Governor's recommended budget.

Further, Senator Kieckhefer and Ms. Casey discussed the policies through which the 2.5 percent merit is awarded. Ms. Casey offered to provide information regarding the percentage of faculty who were historically awarded merit on an annual basis.

In regards to the stipends presented in NSHE's base budget, Chair Joiner asked:

- Whether a certain amount was given to each campus;
- Whether information about how stipends interrelate with faculty compensation was available; and

- Whether there had been any increases in stipends, in the absence of merit increases, to reward extra duties.

Ms. Casey stated stipends are specifically used for additional duties and are not used to offset a person's salary.

Ms. Haartz informed the Committee that NSHE is working on building the budget request for the upcoming biennium. She stated the Office of Finance, Office of the Governor, and the Legislative Counsel Bureau have indicated stipends would be requested as a single general ledger, which would allow flexibility in how institutions would prioritize stipends within their existing staff.

Finally, in response to a question from Assemblywoman Swank, Ms. Casey explained a promotional increase of 10 percent is separate from the stipend process and called attention to the UNR faculty stipend model ([Agenda Item V A-2](#)) as an example.

## **AGENDA ITEM VI—PRESENTATION ON FACULTY COMPENSATION FOR RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION**

Kent M. Ervin, previously identified, prefaced his presentation by stating the importance of promoting students and supporting the workforce development of the state. He reviewed compensation for recruitment and retention of high-quality faculty ([Agenda Item VI A-1](#)).

He pointed out problems within NSHE, such as: (1) increased reliance on part-time and temporary instructors; (2) larger class sizes for students, (3) loss of high-quality faculty due to the noncompetitiveness of salaries and lack of opportunity for advancement; and (4) increased student support of the burden of higher education expenses.

Additionally, he listed the following faculty compensation system problems:

- Difficulty recruiting against national competition;
- Increasing reliance on retention packages;
- Lagging salaries versus national competition;
- No regular in-rank advancement opportunities; and
- Salary compression and inversion.

To help with these problems, Dr. Ervin listed the four components of a sustainable faculty compensation model, which have been stressed since the budget crisis of 2009 through 2013:

1. A strong healthcare and retirement benefits package, without premium increases or benefit reductions;

2. Annual cost-of-living adjustments to keep up with inflation;
3. Annual in-rank salary increases to reward and retain excellent faculty members and to provide for advancement within rank; and
4. Base salary levels competitive with peer and aspirant institutions.

Dr. Ervin stated the NFA recommends:

- Establishing a sustainable system of annual in-rank salary advancement for faculty funded at a level comparable to the classified step system;
- Having one-time funding for competitive salary adjustments, compression, and equity;
- Increasing state formula funding per weighted student credit hours (WSCH) to keep up with the Higher Education Price Index after including COLAs and in-rank increases to halt further increased reliance on student tuition;
- Providing flexibility for 2- and 4-year colleges and the universities to implement best practices for awarding in-rank salary increases according to their needs; and
- Sharing costs proportionally to revenues among the State General Fund, student fees and tuition, and other NSHE revenue.

In closing, Dr. Ervin stated the NFA's opposition to the idea that the availability of individual compensation steps would be regulated to overall institutional performance criteria. He said the NFA is of the opinion that doing so would not align with how academic institutions work or promote goals of attracting, retaining, and rewarding excellent faculty.

There was discussion among Senator Kieckhefer, Assemblyman Edwards, Dr. Ervin, and Dr. Harrison regarding:

- The 2.5 percent merit calculation;
- The recommendation to increase state formula funding per WSCH; and
- The requested \$90 million;

Assemblyman Edwards noted that he would like to reduce the cost of higher education for students, so he would like Dr. Ervin to provide a breakdown of how many years it would take to get the faculty compensation level to the desired level, including the potential funding source for that increase. He expressed concern over using student fees and tuition to fund the increase.

Chair Joiner thanked Dr. Ervin for providing a different way to examine information regarding compensation for recruitment and retention of high-quality faculty. However, she stated she was still concerned about the buying power decrease and was of the opinion that it was not reflected in the salary presented.

Dr. Ervin clarified that NFA's data differs from AAUP's data in that:

- AAUP has its own definition for doctoral university;
- AAUP provides average salaries, not medians; and
- NFA demonstrates full-time teaching faculty only.

Vice Chair Denis expressed concern over using student fees and tuition to fund any increase.

Prior to the meeting, Dr. Ervin submitted a bulletin from the 1989–1990 *Study of the Merit Pay Program of the University of Nevada System* for the record ([Agenda Item VI A-2](#)).

Thomas Harrison, previously identified, gave an overview of compensation for NSHE, which focused on comments from faculty and staff about aspirations of R1 classification, compression, failed faculty searches, inversion, morale, quality of life and COLA, recruiting, and retention and turnover ([Agenda Item VI B](#)). Dr. Harrison explained how he had evaluated faculty in the past for the awarding of merit. He noted the distribution of effort he used was approximately 40 percent each for teaching and research and the remaining 20 percent for service, which translates into two days each for teaching and research and one day for service.

Dr. Harrison stated the Faculty Senate agrees with the NFA's recommendations as well as the four components of a sustainable faculty compensation model.

There was discussion between Senator Kieckhefer, Dr. Ervin, Dr. Harrison, and Cheryl Cardoza, Professor, Truckee Meadows Community College, regarding the process of hiring new faculty at institutions in relation to the issue of compression.

Assemblywoman Swank noted the problem of compression was not created by hiring new faculty members at a salary that exceeds those of existing professors, but rather by the recession and elimination of the previous merit system.

## **AGENDA ITEM VII—OVERVIEW OF STATE APPROACHES TO COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS FOR FACULTY**

Joseph Roy, Ph.D., Senior Researcher, AAUP, outlined faculty compensation and practices ([Agenda Item VII](#)). The AAUP warned that compensation systems lacking in transparency and fairness are likely to foster low morale and lower productivity; a counter offer system implicitly rewards lower productivity, and even faculty who are retained are not happy about it.

He noted the four elements of faculty compensation are: (1) salary; (2) fringe benefits; (3) resources such as research, teaching, and service; and (4) organizational support. He further noted that only three institutions of NSHE participated in the AAUP's annual salary and benefits survey most recently: CSN, UNLV, and UNR.

Dr. Roy said the AAUP advised:

- An in-rank salary advancement system will lead to retention of faculty; and
- Faculty will benefit from a transparent and fair reward system in which they have a voice at the setup stage and in execution.

Assemblywoman Swank expressed concern that the retention offer system may disadvantage professors with families and asked whether any data was available regarding implementing this system that shows an increase in the cost of doing a search.

Dr. Roy stated that sort of data is not tracked.

In response to Dr. Sander's question about loss rate, Dr. Roy stated the AAUP does not collect data about why faculty leave institutions; however, the rate has remained stable over the last 40 years.

Discussion ensued between Chair Joiner and Dr. Roy regarding an in-rank salary advancement system. Dr. Roy said:

- The AAUP's policy is to have the implementation and setup of an in-rank salary advancement system take place at the level of local institutions, with input from faculty under a model of shared governance; and
- Faculty from institutions would best be able to evaluate whether the in-rank advancement system falls under their description.

## **AGENDA ITEM VIII—SUMMARY OVERVIEW OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENT FEE REVENUES**

Heidi Haartz, previously identified, provided an overview of NSHE registration fees in which she notified the Committee that: (1) fees collected from students are utilized for the direct benefit of students; and (2) unspent registration fees may be balanced forward for one fiscal year, with certain exceptions ([Agenda Item VIII A-1](#)).

Ms. Haartz submitted information regarding NSHE distribution and use of registration fees for the record ([Agenda Item VIII A-2](#)).

## **AGENDA ITEM IX—PRESENTATION ON TEACHER VACANCIES IN NEVADA**

**(This agenda item was taken out of order.)**

Chair Joiner explained that information related to teacher vacancies was requested following questions that arose at the Committee meeting on April 17, 2018, related to teacher vacancies in Nevada and to satisfy the specific charge in subsection 3, Section 2 of [AB 202](#) (2017) related to teaching.

Dena Durish, Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement, Department of Education (DOE), provided an overview of teacher vacancies in Nevada ([Agenda Item IX](#)). She shared the challenges in reporting and collecting data on educator vacancies prior to 2014–2015.

Ms. Durish asked the Committee to:

- Consider the importance of placing educators and preservice educators in settings where vacancies will arise; and
- Ensure educators and preservice educators receive experiences that mirror positions into which they are hired throughout their teaching preparation.

Ms. Durish called attention to [Assembly Bill 7](#) (2017), which amended state laws to conform with federal law, specifically the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015. The bill presented a greater opportunity to capture data, and provided that data to higher institutions. She concluded by stating the importance of NSHE in ensuring educators receive ongoing professional development.

Assemblyman Edwards asked about the number of vacancies in relation to the number of teachers who retired or left the profession. He questioned whether the issue of retention made the number of vacancies more manageable.

Ms. Durish said that because the data was not collected prior to 2014–2015, teacher turnover in districts and schools has not been considered. She added that several different stakeholder groups identified group causes of vacancies, such as the: (1) lack of students entering the profession; (2) level of preparedness of those entering the field; and (3) rate at which people are exiting the field. She offered to provide a report on the root causes of teacher vacancies, and she noted that the school districts may track that information.

Chair Joiner asked:

- Whether there are any programs that would be helpful that are not already in place;
- Whether the incentive programs appear to be working; and
- Whether the number of vacancies in Nevada is improving.

Ms. Durish said there are trends and programs that are working; however, some programs have caused unintended consequences, such as new teachers getting paid more than second- and third-year teachers due to incentives. She shared the biggest concern amongst the districts is the timing of the legislative cycle. She noted the recruitment season for schools is January through June, so legislation passed by the 2017 Legislature to assist in recruitment efforts is generally not useful until the following year. One example is [Assembly Bill 434](#) (2017).

She concluded by stating that data regarding teacher retention in School Years 2015–2016, 2016–2017, and 2017–2018 will be collected from the districts.

Discussion ensued between Chair Joiner and Ms. Durish regarding the shortage of teachers. Ms. Durish affirmed there are not enough people who want to go into the teaching profession. She pointed out the NevadaTeach Program at UNR is an effective means to increase the number of teachers certified to teach in shortage areas such as mathematics, science, and engineering at the middle school or high school level ([Assembly Bill 522](#) [2017]). She stated the institutions are willing to expand capacity of courses and programs to encourage people to go into essential professions.

#### **AGENDA ITEM X—PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Joiner called for public comment; however, no testimony was presented.

## **AGENDA ITEM XI—ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Maria de la Luz Aguayo  
Research Policy Assistant

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Jennifer Ruedy  
Senior Principal Policy Analyst

APPROVED BY:

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Assembly Member Amber Joiner, Chair

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



## MEETING MATERIALS

AGENDA ITEM	WITNESS/ENTITY	DESCRIPTION
<a href="#">Agenda Item II</a>	Thomas Harrison, Ph.D., Chair, Faculty Senate, University of Nevada, Reno (UNR)	35 letters of public comment
<a href="#">Agenda Item IV A</a>	Crystal Abba, Vice Chancellor, Academic and Student Affairs, Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE)	Memorandum
<a href="#">Agenda Item IV B</a>	Jim Fox, Managing Director, Gallagher Benefit Services, Inc.	Microsoft PowerPoint presentation
<a href="#">Agenda Item IV C</a>	Brody Leiser, Senior Program Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau	Memorandum
<a href="#">Agenda Item V A-1</a>	Christine Casey, Senior Director, Human Resources, NSHE	Microsoft PowerPoint presentation
<a href="#">Agenda Item V A-2</a>	Christine Casey, Senior Director, Human Resources, NSHE	Handout
<a href="#">Agenda Item VI A-1</a>	Kent M. Ervin, Ph.D., Legislative Liaison, Nevada Faculty Alliance (NFA)	Microsoft PowerPoint presentation
<a href="#">Agenda Item VI A-2</a>	Kent M. Ervin, Ph.D., Legislative Liaison, NFA	<i>Study of the Merit Pay Program of the University of Nevada System: Bulletin 91-15</i>
<a href="#">Agenda Item VI B</a>	Thomas Harrison, Ph.D., Chair, Faculty Senate, UNR	Microsoft PowerPoint presentation
<a href="#">Agenda Item VII</a>	Joseph Roy, Ph.D., Senior Researcher, American Association of University Professors	Presentation
<a href="#">Agenda Item VIII A-1</a>	Heidi Haartz, Assistant Budget Director, Department of Finance, NSHE	Microsoft PowerPoint presentation
<a href="#">Agenda Item VIII A-2</a>	Heidi Haartz, Assistant Budget Director, Department of Finance, NSHE	Handout
<a href="#">Agenda Item IX</a>	Dena Durish, Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement, Department of Education	Microsoft PowerPoint presentation

The Summary Minutes are supplied as an informational service. Copies of all meeting materials are on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau, Carson City, Nevada. You may contact the Library at [www.leg.state.nv.us/lcb/research/library/feedbackmail.cfm](http://www.leg.state.nv.us/lcb/research/library/feedbackmail.cfm) or (775) 684-6827.