

**Career Pathway Task Force
Proposal to the Nevada Legislative Committee on Education
June 21, 2018**

**Submitted by:
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Supporting Frameworks

- NCEE Building Blocks 5 & 6
- NCSL No Time to Lose Element 2
- TeachStrong Policy Principles 2, 5, 8, and 9

BDR Proposal

The following proposal seeks to:

- 1) Develop a task force that is designed to study both professional designations, as well as employment designations within the teaching profession in Nevada, and then
- 2) Make recommendations to the Commission on Professional Standards (COPS) for the implementation of a tiered licensure structure connected to and informed by formalized and specified scopes of professional practice
- 3) The task force would ideally be comprised of currently practicing teachers, person(s) with expertise in systems design, a representative of the general public, a representative of teacher preparation programs, a representative from the Nevada Department of Education, a representative of a collective bargaining unit.

Legislative Precedent for Similar Task Force

- SB 497 (2017)
- SB 474 (2015)

Rationale

The terms career ladder and career pathway get used often in education improvement discussions across the country. Additionally, designations such as data coach, instructional strategist, teacher leader, etc. also get used in varying ways, and this creates confusion and inconsistency within the profession. This proposal is attempting to ensure that Nevada's teacher licensing system is robust and meaningful enough that it can be the basis of career pathways in districts and publicly funded charter schools so that there can be professional consistency in how differentiated professional nuance and expertise is understood throughout the state.

The idea for this task force came from many experiences discussing, researching, and being frustrated with the varying meanings and definitions of career pathways and ladders within the education profession. In 2017 Nevada Succeeds convened groups of teachers, support professionals, other licensed educational

personnel, and administrators over a five-month period to develop recommendations for career pathways that augmented and supported one another for the benefit of all students' learning.

The main takeaway from these focus groups was that education professionals, of all types, often do not know what professional expertise other professionals, even with the same license, possess. The recommendation from these focus groups was to better define scopes of professional practice at the professional (in education, that is the state) level.

Supporting Research

History of the call to professionalize teaching

- Teaching has historically been described as an “unstaged occupation,” with few opportunities to access higher earning and higher status positions as one would experience in other “staged professions.” Within the profession, income increments are generally modest and there are few status differences among practitioners. Yet the opportunity for significant upward movement is, in essence, the definition of a career. Attorneys can be appointed partners; academics can gain rank and promotion; crafts move through stages of apprenticeship, journeyman, and master craftsman; and business and governmental organizations provide hierarchies of power and privilege (Lortie, 1975). The main opportunity for career advancement for teachers has been—and remains today—leaving the classroom to become a school administrator.
 - The overarching goal of a teacher career advancement continuum is to ensure consistent access by all students to excellent teachers and teaching teams, create the conditions for advancing student learning for all students, increase the effectiveness of all teachers, and retain the most effective and talented teachers.¹

The professionalism of medicine

- Below are two excerpts from Ron Thorpe's article in the New England Journal of Public Policy entitled: “Sustaining the Teaching Profession” and speaks to the history of medicine's professionalization and what teaching and the education profession as a whole may be able to learn from such a model. One of the biggest differences with medicine and public education, however, is that the profession drove the professionalization and in public education policy makers are attempting to drive improvement via some other means than true professionalization scaling.²
 - “Although there are many differences between medicine and teaching, there is much to be learned from the similarities between the two and the story of how the medical profession evolved. In his *Social Transformation of American Medicine*, Paul Starr points

¹ Natale, C., Gaddis, L., Bassett, K., & McKnight, K. (2013). “Creating Sustainable Teacher Career Pathways: A 21st Century Imperative. Executive Summary,” a joint publication of Pearson & National Network of State Teachers of the Year.

² Thorpe, Ronald (2014) "Sustaining the Teaching Profession," *New England Journal of Public Policy*: Vol. 26 : Iss. 1 , Article 5. Available at: <https://scholarworks.umb.edu/nejpp/vol26/iss1/5>

out: “In the nineteenth century, the medical profession was generally weak, divided, insecure in its status and its income, unable to control entry into practice or to raise the standards of medical education. In the twentieth century, not only did physicians become a powerful, prestigious, and wealthy profession, but they succeeded in shaping the basic organization and financial structure of American medicine.” These words summarize an amazing story. Few people in the United States realize that not long ago the practice of medicine was a mess and that those who practiced it were held in low esteem. Many doctors probably do not know the full history. A hundred years ago, doctors were not what they are today, and neither was the practice of medicine. Only a few very accomplished physicians practiced during the nineteenth century, and they tended to come from wealthy families, to have degrees from elite universities, and to serve a patient base with the same pedigree. Dependable medical care was the exception, and it was often connected to people whose life situation already put them in a healthier position. The challenge for the medical profession in the twentieth century was to establish what accomplished practice was and then to take that practice to scale.”²

- “While there is no single moment, person, or act that explains how medicine made the pivot Starr refers to, historians frequently point to 1910 as an important stroke on the timeline. In that year, Abraham Flexner delivered his famous “Bulletin Number Four,” *Medical Education in the United States and Canada*, outlining what medical education needed to be if medicine were ever to become a true profession. Commissioned by the Carnegie Commission for the Advancement of Teaching, the Flexner Report recommends that all medical training be moved to research universities, that it be driven by science, and that only individuals who are graduated from these institutions may become physicians. To take one measure of what this report has meant to the medical profession, one need only consider that in the late nineteenth century there were more than 300 so-called medical schools in the United States, many of which were for-profit. Today, there are 141 medical schools. That reduction is even more impressive when one realizes that the U.S. population in 1900 was 76 million, and today it is over 330 million. Those who believed medicine deserved to become a profession felt that the surest way to make that happen was to take on the unregulated free-for-all of medical schools and rebuild them according to a standards-based vision.”²

Further Rationale

Further rationale for this proposal is presented in five discrete sections; (1) timeliness (2) professionalism, (3) career ladders, (4) tiered licensing structure/scopes of practice, and (5) funding. Each section will be supported by current academic research and implementation practices.

Timeliness. Over the past decade, Nevada has faced increasing teacher recruitment and retention issues, as well as localized funding concerns. Nevada’s goal is to become the fastest improving state in the nation, and we are prepared to learn from both research and best practices in order to optimize our growth as a state. This growth includes ensuring that our best and brightest teachers remain in the classroom and within the profession while we also attract new talent. This proposal marks the beginning

of setting a vision for the State of Nevada to lead the United States in truly professionalizing teaching by ensuring that all parts of this profession are aligned appropriately.

Professionalism. Researchers, policy makers, universities, educators themselves, as well as other stakeholders have been calling for the professionalization of teaching for more than 100 years. Since public education is both a profession and a public good, many of the recommendations for professionalizing teaching have been overlooked in the US in favor of what the public believes the profession needs. Most of the highest performing education systems in the world have leveraged the research and recommendations of the United States to design, develop, and support their teaching profession to align with other highly respected professions.

Career ladders. Over the past several decades, there has been significant debate and discussion about how to attract and retain teachers in the education field. Consistently, career ladders are discussed as a means of solving the attrition and attraction problems the teaching profession faces. States, districts and charter schools often state that they are implementing career ladders for teachers, yet almost none of these career ladders are connected or meaningful outside of their jurisdiction. This disconnection fuels the narrative that the teaching profession is broken and doesn't align with what other "staged" professions do when developing and professionalizing.

Tiered Licensure Structure/Scopes of Practice. Defining scopes of practice and then developing career ladder frameworks at both the professional and employment levels are foundational to ensuring that the teaching profession in Nevada is robust and respected. Without these two foundational components, career ladder efforts in Nevada will continue to be just that-efforts.

Scope of Practice is a term that is most often associated with healthcare or nursing, but is also applicable to teaching. Today there are many jobs and roles within the teaching profession, some formal and some informal, but there is little consistency or transferability associated among them. For example, to be a "data strategist" or a "learning strategist" may mean different things in different schools, districts, and states. In order to grow as a state, these roles need to be better understood, developed, scaled, and compensated.

If the teaching profession had a better understanding of the true differentiated expertise within the profession, students would be served better, teachers would be better able to understand how to leverage one another's expertise, and the public would be better able to see

A tiered licensing structure can be leveraged to promote ongoing educator development, career advancement, and retention within the profession. Many states (e.g., Colorado, New Hampshire, Ohio, Oregon) have aligned licensing structures with measures of teacher effectiveness to create a career ladder aimed at rewarding great teachers. Designated tiers reflect levels of professional and instructional competence that are evidenced by the educator. For example, in Ohio a teacher may move through the following four levels of licensure (1) Resident Educator, (2) Professional Educator, (3) Senior Professional Educator, and (4) Lead Professional Educator. Each of these licenses include a specific scope of practice that will guide the teacher through their work, while moving the state and local districts toward positive student outcomes.

Funding. Nevada has committed legislatively to implement a weighted funding formula by 2022. Development of a career pathway model based on a recognized professional-level, not job-level, scope of practice will help ensure the justification for paying professionals for their differentiated and specialized expertise will be possible.

Since this is not a proposal to develop a career pathway program, but rather a strategy to rebuild the foundation of a profession so that career pathways can be sustainable and show true, measurable return on investment (ROI), the state's move toward a weighted funding formula will actually help ensure this happens in a way that is sustainable.

There is strong evidence that launching a teacher career pathway initiative requires vision, stakeholder support (teachers in particular), a school/district culture that can deal with change and ambiguity, and external support—either monetary or technical assistance. Sustaining these initiatives requires much the same, except that funding continuity is the greatest challenge. In almost all cases, some form of external funding was required to launch the initiative, with varying levels of district funding sources. However, grants are designed to launch programs, not sustain them. Planning up-front on how to continue the initiative after grants phase out is critical for program credibility and staff buy-in—particularly veteran staff who have seen grant-funded programs come and go.³

Given that many career pathway programs rely on grant funding, the sustainability of many of these programs is jeopardized. When career pathway programs cease or get cut, education professionals are frustrated and demoralized that their professional expertise is not able to be recognized or paid commensurately.

Below are four examples of various funding methods for career ladder programs around the country.⁴

1. District of Columbia Public Schools— “DC Leadership Initiative for Teachers (LIFT)”

IMPACT, IMPACTPlus and LIFT have been supported by federal grant funds (Teacher Incentive Fund and Race to the Top), but there are plans to absorb program costs into general staffing and operating budgets of schools as grant funds diminish.

2. Scottsdale, Arizona— “Scottsdale Career Ladder Program”

Over time, Scottsdale's program became funded primarily from local funds (a local tax levy); however, loss of state funding made continuation difficult.

3. Seattle, Washington— “Seattle Career Ladder Program”

In 2010, Seattle was awarded a \$12.5 million TIF grant to fund a major overhaul of its teacher evaluation system and to fund leadership development, including the Seattle Career Ladder Program. The program is now fully funded through school baseline dollars.

4. Charlotte-Mecklenburg, North Carolina— “L.I.F.T. Opportunity Culture Initiative”

Initial transition costs were funded by foundations and the district to implement the OC models in schools. The initiative is designed so that the higher pay for advanced roles is funded by

³ Natale, C., Gaddis, L., Bassett, K., & McKnight, K. (2016) “Teacher Career Advancement Initiatives: Lessons Learned from Eight Case Studies,” A report prepared for the National Network of State Teachers of the Year (NNSTOY) and Pearson, pg. 10 <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED581291.pdf>

⁴ Natale, C., Gaddis, L., Bassett, K., & McKnight, K. (2016) “Teacher Career Advancement Initiatives: Lessons Learned from Eight Case Studies,” A report prepared for the National Network of State Teachers of the Year (NNSTOY) and Pearson, pp. 19-22 <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED581291.pdf>

reallocating staffing funds within the school's own allocated budget, resulting in zero additional grant or external funds required over time. This is accomplished by exchanging the funding for certain teacher specialist roles, teaching positions and/or teaching assistant positions for supplements paid to teachers in new "extended reach" leadership roles.

Examples of varied efforts across states, districts, schools to differentiate the teaching workforce instead of the profession as a whole:

- NNSTOY studied eight teacher career advancement initiatives implemented across a variety of contexts (i.e., urban, suburban, rural, high poverty, affluent, union presence) and identified key components of successful, sustainable teacher career continuums that have had an positive impact on teacher recruitment and retention, job satisfaction, and student achievement. The states included California, D.C., Colorado, Tennessee, Arizona, Iowa, Washington, and North Carolina.⁵
 - **Missouri Model:** The state of Missouri successfully implemented their Teacher Career Ladder Program for more than twenty-five years until it was discontinued in the 2010-2011 school year because of state budget cuts. This program was considered the oldest and most successful of its kind until that time. Teachers in participating Missouri school districts were eligible to receive supplemental pay for extra work that contributed to improvement in students' academic outcomes, such as providing opportunities for enhanced student learning experiences, offering remedial assistance to students, or engaging in professional development activities. (National Center on Performance Incentives 2008 According to two separate studies completed in 2009 by Mathematica Policy Research on the effectiveness of Missouri's Career Ladder Program, the Career Ladder Program does, in fact, show some positive outcomes. The overall achievement growth of children in schools participating in the Career Ladder versus non Career Ladder were positive. The measurable gains suggest that a district's participation in Career Ladder is associated with an increase in scores of 6.6 percent (Math) and 4.3 percent (Reading) of standard deviation in the distribution.⁶
 - One goal of Missouri's Career Ladder program was to help school districts that have difficulty retaining teachers, particularly those that are small and rural, by offering their teachers opportunities to earn extra pay for extra work and professional development. Eligibility for these opportunities was based on a combination of seniority and subjective performance evaluation. The policymakers who established the program hoped that the incentives created by these opportunities would make teaching in their district more

⁵ Natalie, C., Gaddis, L., Basset, K., & McKnight, K. (2013). Creating Sustainable Teacher Career Pathways: A 21st Century IMperative, a joint publication of Pearson & National Network of State Teachers of the Year. Retrieved from: https://www.nnstoy.org/download/career_pathways/Final%20updated%20Research%20Report.pdf

⁶ Booker, K. and Glazerman, S. "Does the Missouri Teacher Career Ladder Program Raise Student Achievement?," (Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., 2009) Available at: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED507469.pdf>

attractive and consequently boost recruitment and retention. The outcome was that Career Ladder teachers in mid career were 5 percent more likely to stay in the classroom⁷

- A few caveats to consider: The Missouri Teacher Career Ladder Program did not focus on student achievement, ie. test scores, to merit pay increases. Not every school in the State of Missouri participated in the program. In fact, the majority of the schools that did participate had a predominantly white ethnic make-up and the students came from a higher socio-economic background.
- The Missouri Teacher Career Ladder Program program was funded jointly by the state and participating districts. Participating districts were required to provide matching funds, ranging from 40 to 60 percent of total costs. Poorer districts received a higher percentage of state funding. Of the more than 65,000 teachers in 524 districts statewide, more than 17,000 (26%) from 333 districts (64%) participated in the Career Ladder Program during the 2005-06 school year. Teachers in participating districts were eligible to receive supplemental pay for extra work that contributed to improvement in students' academic outcomes, such as providing opportunities for enhanced student learning experiences, offering remedial assistance to students, or engaging in professional development activities. The availability of extra work opportunities, and the rate at which the extra work is compensated, is based on a teacher's Career Ladder status. To be eligible for Stage 1, a teacher must have five years of teaching experience in the state with satisfactory performance on his/her district's PBTE instrument. A teacher must have two years of satisfactory performance at Stage 1 in order to advance to Stage 2. Subsequently, a teacher can move up to the third and final stage by completing three years of satisfactory performance at Stage 2. Stage 1 teachers can earn up to \$1,500 per year, while those in the second and third stages could earn up to \$3,000 and \$5,000 per year, respectively.⁸
- **New York City Model:** The New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) and United Federation of Teachers (UFT) hold a common belief that by extending educators' skills beyond their individual classroom, teachers can be powerful levers of change for school communities⁹.
- New York City Department of Education's Teacher Career Pathways has a dedication to provide teachers opportunities to lead through their classroom and school by continually

⁷ Booker, K. and Glazerman, S. "Effects of the Missouri Career Ladder Program on Teacher Mobility." (Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., 2009) Available at: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED507470.pdf>

⁸ Booker, K. and Glazerman, S. "Missouri's Teacher Career Ladder Program" (Nashville, TN: The National Center on Performance Incentives, 2008) Available at: https://my.vanderbilt.edu/performanceincentives/files/2012/10/Booker_et_al_for_posting1.pdf

⁹ Teacher Career Pathways, NYC Department of Education, <http://schools.nyc.gov/Employees/Teachers/Career/Leadership/About/default>

building trust, expertise, and a collegial environment. A sustainable teacher career pathway will draw upon our teachers' expertise, cultivate professional culture, and provide them a platform to spread effective teaching in their school communities.

- The NYCDOE and UFT gave new form to this belief through the 2014 UFT-DOE teacher contract, which established differentiated career pathway roles for New York City's teachers -- the Model and Master Teacher positions.
- During the spring of 2015, this investment in Teacher Career Pathways (TCP) was expanded through the conception of an additional role, the Peer Collaborative Teacher. Teacher Career Pathways teacher leaders lead through their classroom and school by building trust, expertise, and a collegial environment.
- Starting in 2003 The New York City Department of Education and the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) began developing their Teacher Career Pathways system. This process started by launching a Lead Teacher position that informed the design of Teacher Career Pathways. In 2012 the New York City Department of Education was awarded a \$53 million five-year Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) grant to pilot their teacher leadership model. In 2013, NYCDOE partnered with UFT to launch two career pathways, Instructional Peer Coach and Demonstration Teacher, in 78 high need Middle Schools using the TIF funds. In 2014 NYCDOE formalized two Career Pathways, Model Teacher and Master Teacher in the NYCDOE-UFT teacher contract. The NYCDOE joined the U.S. DOE's Teach to Lead initiative with UFT. In 2015 the NYCDOE-UFT amended the contract to include three distinct Teacher Career Pathway roles, Model and Master Teacher and Peer Collaborative Teacher.
- The New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) Teacher Career Path (TCP) approach in teacher leadership is a strategy to increase access to highly effective teaching, support student achievement, promote teacher retention, and provide development opportunities for teachers to continually build their instructional practice. The New York City Department of Education and United Federation of Teachers hold a common belief that by extending educators' skills beyond their individual classroom, teachers can be powerful levers of change for school communities. The Model Teacher and Master Teacher roles were created as part of the 2014 UFT-DOE teacher contract. During the spring of 2015, the NYCDOE and UFT agreed to amend the contract to further expand the teacher career pathway through the creation of the Peer Collaborative Teacher.

