

NEVADA LEGISLATURE
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
(Nevada Revised Statutes 218.5352)

SUMMARY MINUTES AND ACTION REPORT

The eighth meeting of the Nevada Legislature's Legislative Committee on Education was held on Thursday, June 19, 2008, at 9:30 a.m. in Room 4401 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 www.leg.state.nv.us/74th/Interim. 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; telephone: 775/684-6835).

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN CARSON CITY:

Senator William J. Raggio, Vice Chairman
Senator Bernice Mathews
Senator Maurice E. Washington

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN LAS VEGAS:

Assemblywoman Bonnie Parnell, Chairwoman
Senator Barbara K. Cegavske
Assemblyman Moises Denis
Assemblyman Harvey J. Munford
Assemblyman Lynn D. Stewart

OTHER LEGISLATOR PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Debbie Smith, Washoe County Assembly District No. 30

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT:

Carol M. Stonefield, Supervising Principal Research Analyst, Research Division
Melinda Martini, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division
Kristin Roberts, Senior Principal Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division
Sara Partida, Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division

Joi Davis, Program Analyst, Fiscal Division
Maryann Elorreaga, Senior Research Secretary, Research Division

OPENING REMARKS

Chairwoman Parnell called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone in attendance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE APRIL 17, 2008, MEETING

The Committee **APPROVED THE FOLLOWING ACTION:**

SENATOR CEGAVSKE MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON APRIL 17, 2008, IN CARSON CITY. ASSEMBLYMAN STEWART SECONDED THE MOTION WHICH PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

REPORT ON NEVADA'S SECOND PARENT INVOLVEMENT SUMMIT

- Assemblywoman Debbie Smith, Washoe County Assembly District No. 30, submitted a report titled "Connecting the Dots Report on Nevada's Second Parent Involvement Summit" ([Exhibit B](#)) and reported on Nevada's second parent involvement summit which took place on February 29, 2008, in Las Vegas. She said the results from both summits established that parents, administrators, and teachers were eager to learn more about parent involvement and how they could improve parent involvement in their schools. She said the summit included very powerful workshops and speakers on a variety of subjects that allowed the participants to learn new skills and glean new ideas that they could take back to their districts.
- D'Lisa Crain, Nevada State PIRC (Parent Informational Resources Center) Grant Coordinator, and Education Collaborative and Washoe County School District Parent Involvement Coordinator, said the keynote speaker for the summit was Karen L. Mapp, Ed.D., a lecturer from the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Dr. Mapp shared information about current research, the link between family-school partnerships and student achievement as well as information on practical strategies. She said Assemblywoman Smith closed the day by helping teams from each school district take all of the strategies they had learned during the summit and work through a school improvement plan tied back to their student achievement goals.
- Barbara Clark, Chair, Nevada's Parent Involvement Summit Steering Committee, said the second summit's participants discussed and reaffirmed the need for the following:
 - Leadership and coordination;
 - Resources;

- Building relationships and trust with parents; and
- Need for collaboration.

STATUS REPORT ON THE SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE GROW NETWORK PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF ASSEMBLY BILL 3 (CHAPTER 10, *STATUTES OF NEVADA 2007, 23RD SPECIAL SESSION*)

Chairwoman Parnell said that Section 2 of A.B. 3 of the 23rd Special Session appropriated \$950,000 for the biennium to the Interim Finance Committee. Those funds were to be used to continue the contractual services to report test scores to parents and to provide web-based data to assist in improving performance on statewide assessments.

- Sloane O’Neal, Vice President – Sales and Service, The Grow Network, The McGraw-Hill Companies, conducted a Microsoft PowerPoint Presentation titled “The Nevada Parent Network — Engaging Nevada’s Parents in Their Children’s Achievement” ([Exhibit C](#)). She explained that the program was a web-based resource which contained information that enabled parents to remain engaged in their children’s academic growth. She said the Nevada Parent Network provided:
 - Action plans keyed to grade level and individual student performance;
 - Skill-building activities which could be done at home;
 - A collection of subject-specific websites which provided additional information to parents;
 - Information regarding assessments; and
 - Additional resources for parents.

Ms. O’Neal also discussed how the public was made aware of the Nevada Parent Network through public service announcements, press releases, poster distribution, and informational letters.

STATUS REPORT ON THE SYSTEM OF ACCOUNTABILITY INFORMATION FOR NEVADA (SAIN) INCLUDING THE ENHANCED SYSTEM PROJECT CHARTER

- Keith W. Rheault, Ph.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction, DOE, referred to a packet of information regarding the SAIN quarterly report ([Exhibit D](#)), and reviewed ongoing SAIN activities. He said the current priority was to ensure the Nevada Accountability Report Card was completed by August. He also reviewed changes in the ethnic categories for reporting to the U.S. Department of Education.
- Kenneth Nelmes, Project Manager, Enhanced System of Accountability Information for Nevada (eSAIN), DOE, referred to a document titled “eSAIN Project Charter Executive Summary,” ([Exhibit E](#)). He said SAIN was a first generation statewide longitudinal data system which contained data from Nevada’s local education agencies and State sponsored charter schools. He noted that the enhanced system project charter addressed strategic level objectives, defined the scope and intent of the project; and assigned and allocated rules, authorities, and responsibilities.

PRESENTATION OF THE EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY NEEDS ASSESSMENT RESULTS AS REQUIRED PURSUANT TO SENATE BILL 184 (CHAPTER 420, STATUTES OF NEVADA 2007)

- Dr. Keith Rheault, previously identified, referred to a document titled “Nevada Schools Educational Technology Needs Assessment” ([Exhibit F](#)). He noted Senate Bill 184 (Chapter 420, *Statutes of Nevada 2007*) required the Commission on Educational Technology to conduct an assessment of the needs of each school district relating to educational technology. He said the following research questions were developed to address the assessment requirements:
 - 1) What is the current status of the state and district educational technology plans?
 - 2) In what ways can educational technologies, such as computer-based assessments, laptop computers, and web-based tools, improve instructional development, delivery and assessment in Nevada?
 - 3) What is the current capacity of schools in Nevada to impact positively the achievement of students through the use of educational technologies? and
 - 4) How prepared are Nevada teachers to integrate technology into the classroom?

Dr. Rheault said the results of a survey of teachers indicated almost every classroom in the State had at least one computer connected to the Internet, which could be used for teacher-led instruction but very few classrooms were equipped for student-centered instruction utilizing computers. Teachers were well prepared to use technology in the classroom but professional development opportunities were limited because of time and budget constraints. Additionally, inconsistency in funding made it difficult to have a long range technology plan within the schools.

- Kendall Hartley, Ph.D., Associate Professor, College of Education, UNLV, said to address the questions cited by Dr. Rheault, a research plan with a focus on Nevada classrooms was developed and implemented. He said the data were gathered through the use of a teacher survey, a technology coordinator survey and a limited number of interviews. He said other sources of information included the State technology plan, district technology plans, the Nevada accountability report website, and district applications for State technology implementation funds. He noted the difficulty experienced in gathering the needed information reinforced the recognition of the need for a single data source, such as SAIN. Dr. Hartley said the results of the needs assessment were divided into four sections of the report:
 - 1) State and district technology plans;
 - 2) Findings regarding specific initiatives;
 - 3) A description of the available technology in Nevada schools and classrooms; and
 - 4) Teacher preparation and professional development in the area of technology integration.

Dr. Hartley said for professional development to be effective, it must be systematic, long-term, and have follow-up. He noted that a number of initiatives and experiences had prompted Nevada educators to be optimistic that technology could prove to be a valuable tool in addressing classroom challenges.

Senator Raggio said there were very large sums of money being requested by the districts for technology implementation. He said it appeared the districts were including their “wish lists” in their funding requests. He said the districts should more clearly define their essential needs so the requests could be seriously considered by the Legislature.

Assemblyman Denis said the tendency was to think the money requested was just for computers. He said, generally, one-third was for hardware, one-third was for technical support and one-third was for teacher training.

STATUS REPORT ON THE STUDY OF CURRICULUM CALIBRATION TO MEASURE ALIGNMENT OF COURSEWORK TO ACADEMIC STANDARDS AS REQUIRED PURSUANT TO SENATE BILL 184 (CHAPTER 420, *STATUTES OF NEVADA 2007*)

- Ben Jones, Director of Research, The Standards Company, submitted a status report on the study of the alignment of student assignments to the academic standards in Nevada ([Exhibit G](#)). He gave an overview of the progress of the analysis of student work collected from public schools in Nevada during the period of February to June 2008, noting the final report would be delivered by September 2008.

REPORT ON NEVADA SCHOOL DISTRICT TESTING PROGRAMS AS REQUIRED PURSUANT TO SENATE BILL 110 (CHAPTER 229, *STATUTES OF NEVADA 2007*)

(At the direction of the Chairwoman this item was heard out of order)

- Melinda Martini, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB), said Senate Bill 110 (Chapter 229, *Statutes of Nevada 2007*) required the board of trustees of each school district to prepare and submit to the Legislative Committee on Education (LCE) a report concerning testing of pupils within the school district during the 2006 – 2007 school year. The report was to include:
 - The number of hours pupils in the district spent in testing;
 - The number of hours that teachers and other licensed educational personnel spent in the administration of tests;
 - The best practices adopted by the district with respect to using testing time efficiently in comparison with using the time for instruction; and
 - Any recommendations for legislative changes or changes in practices with respect to the testing of pupils.

She then referred to a memorandum from her to the chairwoman and members of the LCE ([Exhibit H](#)) which summarized the reports received from the school districts regarding time spent on testing required by federal and State governments, as well as school district assessments. She said it appeared that time spent on testing was greatest for pupils and proctors at grades 4, 7, and 8; other educational personnel spent the greatest amount of time on testing at grades 4 and 5. Several of the school districts suggested the Norm-Referenced Tests (NRTs) were not valuable for measuring student progress and proficiency.

Senator Raggio said NRTs provided essential information regarding the progress of Nevada students compared to the nation as a whole.

Gloria Dopf, Deputy Superintendent, Office of Instructional, Research and Evaluative Services, DOE, said the National Assessment of Educational Progress, a nationally mandated test for all states to participate in at particular grade levels, provided a ranking potential even better than an NRT which compares Nevada's students' performance to a national norm that was not on a per state basis.

REPORT ON GUIDANCE PROGRAMS AND COUNSELING MANDATES IN OTHER STATES

- Carol M. Stonefield, Supervising Principal Research Analyst, Research Division, LCB, referred to her memorandum of June 16, 2008, addressed to the chairwoman and members of the LCE, regarding school counseling mandates ([Exhibit I](#)). She said neither the *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) nor the *Nevada Administrative Code* (NAC) specifically defined counseling services nor required a school district to provide a counseling program, although both the NRS and the NAC referred to school counselors among other licensed educational personnel. She reviewed the standards for school counseling programs which were adopted by the State Board of Education in 2002 as well as school counseling mandates in other states. She then reviewed policy options which could be considered by the Committee.

REPORT ON REQUIREMENTS GOVERNING LICENSING AND TRAINING OF SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS IN NEVADA AND OTHER STATES

- Ms. Stonefield then referred to her memorandum, dated June 9, 2008, addressed to Chairwoman Parnell and members of the LCE, regarding substitute teachers in Nevada. ([Exhibit J](#)). She reviewed a table showing the academic requirements, training, and level of permit or certification required in each of the 50 states. She suggested policy options for the Committee's consideration.

SOLICITATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC REGARDING EDUCATION TOPICS AND COMMITTEE DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE RECOMMENDATIONS IN ADVANCE OF THE AUGUST 21, 2008, COMMITTEE MEETING AND WORK SESSION

Chairwoman Parnell and Committee members discussed possible bill draft requests.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Karen Gray, a resident of Henderson, Nevada, expressed her concerns regarding charter schools, the lack of remediation courses in elementary and middle schools, and school boards delegating the creation of school district policies to school superintendents.

Jan Biggerstaff said the DOE needed help at the department level and that there should be fewer obligations for the superintendent so he could perform his job adequately.

Sharla Hales, President, Nevada Association of School Boards, commented on the serious effects on the education of Nevada's students resulting from the severe budget reductions.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maryann Elorreaga
Senior Research Secretary

Carol M. Stonefield
Supervising Principal Research Analyst

APPROVED BY:

Assemblywoman Bonnie Parnell, Chairwoman

Date: _____

LIST OF EXHIBITS

[Exhibit A](#) is the Meeting Notice and Agenda provided by Carol M. Stonefield, Supervising Principal Research Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau (Legislative Counsel Bureau).

[Exhibit B](#) is a report titled “Connecting the Dots Report on Nevada’s Second Parent Involvement Summit,” provided by Assemblywoman Debbie Smith, Washoe County Assembly District No. 30.

[Exhibit C](#) is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “The Nevada Parent Network — Engaging Nevada’s Parents in Their Children’s Achievement, “ provided by Sloane O’Neal, Vice President – Sales and Service, The Grow Network, The McGraw-Hill Companies.

[Exhibit D](#) is a packet of information regarding the System of Accountability Information for Nevada (SAIN), provided by Keith W. Rheault, Ph.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education (DOE).

[Exhibit E](#) is a document titled “eSAIN Project Charter Executive Summary, “ provided by Kenneth Nelmes, Project Manager, Enhanced System of Accountability Information for Nevada, DOE.

[Exhibit F](#) is a document titled “Nevada Schools Educational Technology Needs Assessment,” provided by Keith W. Rheault, Ph.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction, DOE.

[Exhibit G](#) is a status report on the study of curriculum calibration to measure alignment of coursework to academic standards in Nevada schools provided by Ben Jones, Director of Research, The Standards Company.

[Exhibit H](#) is a June 18, 2008, memorandum addressed to the chairwoman and members of the Legislative Committee on Education (LCE) regarding time spent on testing required by federal and State governments, provided by Melinda Martini, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division, LCB.

[Exhibit I](#) is a June 16, 2008, memorandum addressed to the chairwoman and members of the LCE regarding school counseling mandates, provided by Carol M. Stonefield, Supervising Principal Research Analyst, Research Division, LCB.

[Exhibit J](#) is a June 9, 2008, memorandum addressed to the chairwoman and members of the LCE regarding requirements and training of substitute teachers provided by Carol M. Stonefield, Supervising Principal Research Analyst, Research Division, LCB.