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

SUMMARY MINUTES AND ACTION REPORT

The first meeting of the Legislative Committee on Education was held on November 15, 2007, at 10:30 a.m. in Room 3137 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4412 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, 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:

Assemblywoman Bonnie Parnell, Chairwoman
Senator William J. Raggio, Vice Chairman
Senator Bernice Mathews
Senator Maurice E. Washington

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN LAS VEGAS:

Senator Barbara K. Cegavske
Assemblyman Moises (Mo) Denis
Assemblyman Harvey J. Munford
Assemblyman Lynn D. Stewart

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT:

Carol M. Stonefield, Supervising Principal Research Analyst, Research Division
Melinda Martini, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division
Kristin Roberts, Principal 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 introduced the Committee members and the Legislative Counsel Bureau committee staff. She welcomed the guest presenters, members of the public, and those viewing the meeting over the Internet. The Chairwoman then made opening remarks and stressed the importance of the Legislative Committee on Education, noting Article 1, Section 2 of the *Nevada Constitution* assigned the responsibility to establish a uniform system of common schools to the Legislature and, to meet that responsibility, the Legislature had taken a role in the oversight of the public schools. The Chairwoman said much of the work of the Committee would be concerned with the education profession in Nevada; she listed several topics for consideration for possible study by the Committee.

REVIEW OF THE COMMITTEE'S DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND SIGNIFICANT LEGISLATION FROM THE 74TH REGULAR SESSION AND 23RD SPECIAL SESSION

- Carol Stonefield, Supervising Principal Research Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) and Melinda Martini, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division, LCB reviewed the history of the Legislative Committee on Education and gave a brief overview of significant legislation which passed during the 2007 Legislative Session and the 23rd Special Session.

  They addressed the Nevada Education Reform Act (NERA) and the powers and duties imparted to the Committee by the Act. They also discussed the Legislative Bureau of Educational Accountability and Program Evaluation which was also created by NERA.

Senator Raggio asked who would be responsible for developing and implementing the criteria for the performance pay and enhanced compensation program established in Assembly Bill 3 (Chapter 10, *Statutes of Nevada, 23rd Special Session*).

Ms. Stonefield said A.B. 3 established a pilot program which may include:

- Career leadership advancement options to maximize the retention of teachers in the classroom;
- Professional development;
- Group incentives; and
- Multiple assessments of individual teachers, with primary emphasis on individual pupil improvement and growth in academic achievement.

She said each school district that wished to participate would design a program that included some or all of the components and would submit it to the Department of Education (DOE) for approval.

Senator Raggio stated it was unclear how the DOE was going to develop the program; he would like to have the issue included on an early agenda.
Chairwoman Parnell said she agreed with Senator Raggio and that she would like to have updates on the progress of the program at each future meeting of the Committee.

REPORT ON THE WORK PLAN FOR THE COUNCIL TO ESTABLISH ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND CONSIDERATION OF THE REQUEST

FROM THE COUNCIL FOR CONSULTING SERVICES FOR FISCAL YEARS 2008 AND 2009

- Keith W. Rheault, Ph.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction, DOE, reviewed the work plan of the Council to Establish Academic Standards and presented the Council's request for funding to revise the standards of content and performance for social studies and technology education in Fiscal Year (FY) 2008 and for physical education in FY 2009 as well as funding for a contract for services of a consultant to the Council.

- Evelyn Allred, Council to Establish Academic Standards for Public Schools, said the membership of the Council included business people, educators, legislators, and parents who have taken a non political view of developing the best standards for Nevada's students. She stressed the fact that the standards were revised by the Council, not rewritten.

Senator Washington asked how the standards for World History and U.S. History were determined.

Ms. Allred said the writing teams used national standards and curriculum maps from the school districts and then the teachers and the committees developed the process of scope and sequence of where U.S. History and World History belonged.

Senator Raggio referred to a report titled "2006 The State of State Standards," published by the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, which graded the quality of state academic standards. (Exhibit B) He noted Nevada had been given a "B" in English; a "C" in Mathematics; a "D" in Science; a "C" in U.S. History; and a "D" in World History which averaged out to an overall grade of "C minus." He said, in his opinion, Nevada's academic standards should be closely examined to determine if they were deficient.

Ms. Allred said the Council would be conducting a retreat on November 16, 2007, and would be reviewing the 10-year history of Nevada's academic standards at that time.

Dr. Rheault responded to Senator Raggio's comments regarding the Fordham report. He said the Council had been provided with reports from all of the groups that review Nevada's standards. He noted a similar review in *Education Week* that gave Nevada an "A minus" in all the same categories listed in the Fordham report

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Assemblyman Denis asked if there were national academic standards.

Ms. Allred explained she was not talking about national academic standards but rather standards developed by reputable groups such as the National Association of Civics Teachers or the National Science Association.

Chairwoman Parnell asked if members of the public were given the opportunity to testify at the Council meetings.

Senator Cegavske said the Council meetings were governed by the open meeting law and the public was given the opportunity to testify at every meeting.

Ms. Allred said the standards were disseminated to the public for comment and review before they were adopted.

Chairwoman Parnell asked that the Committee be given a report on the Council's retreat.

The Committee **APPROVED THE FOLLOWING ACTION:**

SENATOR WASHINGTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE REPORT ON THE WORK PLAN FOR THE COUNCIL TO ESTABLISH ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND TO APPROVE THE REQUEST FROM THE COUNCIL FOR CONSULTING SERVICES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008-2009. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY ASSEMBLYMAN STEWART AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

APPROVAL OF THE 2007 LIST OF EFFECTIVE REMEDIAL PROGRAMS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

- Joi Davis, Program Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division, LCB, said a review committee, comprised of the Legislative Bureau of Educational Accountability and Program Evaluation, staff of the DOE, and a University of Nevada, Reno faculty member, reviewed the 53 existing programs on the 2006 List of Effective Remedial Programs to and also reviewed four new programs for possible inclusion on the 2007 list. She said, based on the findings of the review committee, LCB staff recommended the 53 existing programs remain on the list and no new programs be added.

After a discussion among the members, the Committee decided it needed more information regarding the effectiveness of the programs on the list before it could take action to approve the list.

APPROVAL OF SELECTION OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY TO MEASURE THE ALIGNMENT OF CLASS ASSIGNMENTS TO ACADEMIC STANDARDS

- Joi Davis, previously identified in these minutes, said Senate Bill 184 (Chapter 420, *Statutes of Nevada 2007*) appropriated $340,200 from the State General Fund to the Interim Finance Committee for the costs of a study to measure the alignment of class assignments given to pupils at selected grade levels with the standards of content and performance established by the Council to Establish Academic Standards. She noted S.B. 184 required the Legislative Committee on Education to select 100 public schools to participate in the study and the grade levels to be reviewed at each school. She explained the prescribed procedure for conducting the study.

- Carol Crothers, Director, Office of Assessments, Program Accountability, and Curriculum, DOE, explained the 100 schools recommended for participation in the study were selected based on their geographic location, student proficiency, and socioeconomic status (Exhibit C).

The Committee **APPROVED THE FOLLOWING ACTION:**

ASSEMBLYMAN DENIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE SELECTION OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY TO MEASURE THE ALIGNMENT OF CLASS ASSIGNMENTS TO ACADEMIC STANDARDS. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY ASSEMBLYMAN STEWART AND PASSED. (SENATORS RAGGIO AND WASHINGTON WERE ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

PRESENTATION ON SCHOOL DESIGNATIONS AND ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS OF NEVADA PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS FOR THE 2006-2007 SCHOOL YEAR

- Gloria Dopf, Deputy Superintendent of Instruction, Research and Evaluative Services DOE, gave an overview of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and reported on the most recent AYP results.
- Carol Crothers, previously identified in these minutes, referred to a document titled "A Guide to Adequate Yearly Progress Analyses in Nevada 2007" (Exhibit D), and gave an overview Nevada's method of determining AYP classifications.

STATUS OF EDUCATION ISSUES PRESENTED DURING THE 74TH SESSION OF THE NEVADA LEGISLATURE

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

- Melinda Martini, previously identified in these minutes, stated the agenda item was included at the request of the Chairwoman to provide members with a base of information concerning topics of interest to the 2007 Legislature. She briefly discussed Senate bills and Assembly bills that passed during the 2007 Legislative Session and

the 23rd Special Session which addressed education issues, such as the number and type of examinations administered statewide and those that are district-specific examinations; duties of school counselors in Nevada public schools; student progression from middle school to high school; and the teaching profession in Nevada.

- Dr. Keith Rheault, previously identified in these minutes, gave a brief status report on how the DOE was addressing the bill requirements. He said the DOE was doing the following:
  - Developing a common report format to be used by all of the school districts when reporting on their district testing practices;
  - Gathering information from the districts regarding the policies they are adopting which address the duties of school counselors;
  - Developing regulations to comply with newly adopted legislation dealing with student promotion from middle school to high school and academic probation;
  - Developing the application process for incentive funds for at risk teachers in at risk schools and teachers in hard to fill positions and for performance pay programs.

- Gloria Dopf, previously identified in these minutes, explained the components of the applications for money from the Grant Fund for Incentives for Licensed Educational Personnel and for money from the funds appropriated from the State General Fund for pilot programs of performance pay and enhanced compensation for the recruitment and retention of licensed teachers. She said the applications were developed in compliance with Assembly Bill 1 (Chapter 8, *Statutes of Nevada 2007, 23rd Special Session*) and A.B. 3. She also discussed the criteria for eligibility for the funds.

IDENTIFICATION OF ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION AND REVIEW BY THE COMMITTEE AND APPROVAL OF THE COMMITTEE WORK PLAN AND MEETING SCHEDULE, 2007-2008 INTERIM

(At the direction of the Chairwoman, this item was taken out of order.)

- Carol Stonefield, previously identified in these minutes, said Senate Bill 4 (Chapter 4, *Statutes of Nevada 2007, 23rd Special Session*) directed the Legislative Committee on Education to consider studying tests required by State law; truancy; long-term substitute teachers; and governance of public schools. Ms. Stonefield said, at the request of the Chairwoman, LCB Staff had identified the following additional topics for possible study by the Committee: testing, exit exams, charter schools, and aspects of the education profession.

Senator Washington commented on the intention of the State Board of Education to impose a moratorium on charter school sponsorship and asked if the Committee could send a letter to the State Board, asking that it not take action on the sponsorship issue until the Legal Division of the LCB could advise the Board on the intent of Assembly Bill 334 (Chapter 313 *Statutes of Nevada 2007*).

Chairwoman Parnell said the Committee needed to ensure that neither the State Board of Education nor the school districts took any action that was contrary to the intent of A.B. 334 regarding sponsorship of charter schools.

The Committee **APPROVED THE FOLLOWING ACTION:**

SENATOR MATHEWS MOVED TO SEND A LETTER TO THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION ASKING THAT IT NOT IMPOSE A MORATORIUM ON CHARTER SCHOOL SPONSORSHIP UNTIL THE LEGAL DIVISION OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU ADVISED THE STATE BOARD REGARDING DECISIONS ABOUT CHARTER SCHOOLS. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY ASSEMBLYMAN DENIS AND PASSED. (SENATORS RAGGIO AND WASHINGTON WERE ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

The Committee members discussed possible topics for study during the 2007 – 2008 interim. The members also agreed on meeting dates for the balance of the interim period and directed LCB staff to post the dates on the calendar of meetings on the Legislative website.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one came forward for public comment.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Maryann Elorreaga
Senior Research Secretary

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Carol M. Stonefield,
Supervising Principal Research Analyst

APPROVED BY:

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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, Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB).

Exhibit B is a report titled "2006 The State of State Standards," published by the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation

Exhibit C is a chart of the schools recommended for participation in an alignment study submitted by Carol Crothers, Director, Office of Assessments, Program Accountability, and Curriculum, Nevada's Department of Education (DOE)

Exhibit D is a document titled "A Guide to Adequate Yearly Progress Analyses in Nevada 2007," submitted by Carol Crothers, Director, Office of Assessments, Program Accountability, and Curriculum, DOE