

# **REGIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS**

***(Nevada Revised Statutes [NRS] 391.512)***

## **DESCRIPTION**

Duties: The primary mission of the Regional Training Programs (aka Regional Professional Development Programs [RPDPs]) is to provide training to teachers and administrators concerning the statewide academic standards. In addition, the RPDPs are responsible for implementing the Nevada Early Literacy Intervention Program (NELIP), which provides training for teachers who teach kindergarten and grades 1, 2, or 3 on methods to teach fundamental reading skills.

The primary mission of the Statewide Council for the Coordination of the RPDPs is to adopt uniform standards for high quality professional development through the RPDPs, coordinate training programs across the regions, and conduct long-range planning concerning the professional development needs of teachers and administrators in Nevada.

Selection Process: The RPDPs are operated by the school districts. There are three regional governing boards that oversee the training provided to teachers and administrators. Pursuant to NRS 391.524, each governing body must consist of the superintendent of schools for each school district in the region, master teachers, representatives of the Nevada System of Higher Education, and a nonvoting member who is an employee of the Department of Education.

The Statewide Council for the Coordination of the RPDPs consists of seven members, as follows: the Coordinator for each of the three RPDPs, one member of the governing body for each region, and one representative of the Nevada State Education Association appointed by the President of that Association.

Budget: State funding of \$7.8 million in each fiscal year of the 2009-2011 biennium supports the operation of RPDPs. In addition, State funding of \$100,000 in each fiscal year of the 2009-2011 biennium supports the duties of the Statewide Council in providing additional training opportunities for educational administrators in Nevada.

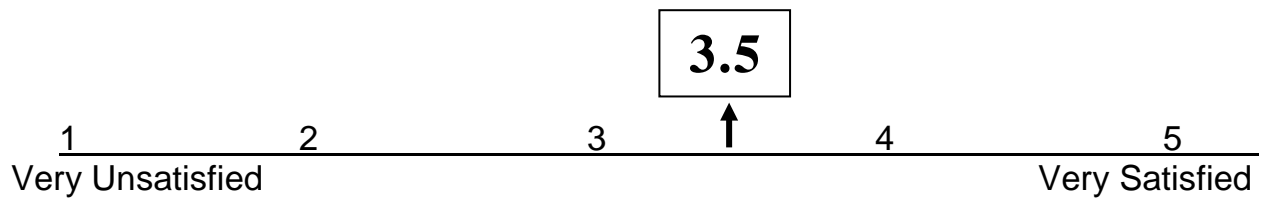
### Communication Structure:

- ✓ Department of Education: Pursuant to NRS 391.524, an employee of the Department is a nonvoting member of the governing body of an RPDP.
- ✓ School Districts: Pursuant to NRS 391.520, the Statewide Council must coordinate the dissemination of information to school districts, administrators, and teachers concerning the training programs provided through the RPDPs.
- ✓ Teachers and Administrators: Pursuant to NRS 391.544, the RPDPs provide training based upon an assessment of needs for training within each region.
- ✓ State Board, Commission on Professional Standards, Legislative Committee on Education, and Legislative Bureau of Educational Accountability and Program Evaluation: Pursuant to NRS 391.552, the governing body of each RPDP must submit an annual report of the evaluation of the success of each RPDP to each entity.

## **SURVEY RESULTS**

**Respondents: 51 Surveys, Representing 99 Respondents**

**How satisfied are you with the process for training teachers and administrators in Nevada concerning the statewide academic standards? (n=44)**



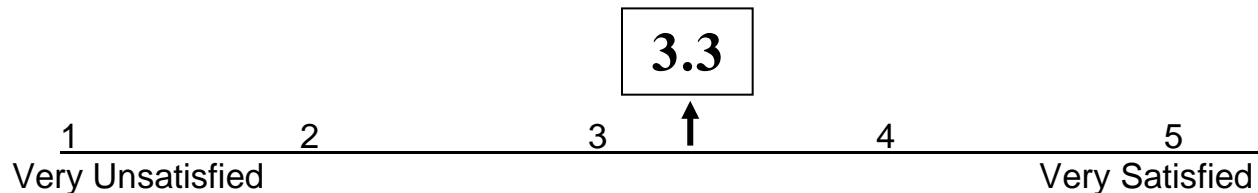
### **Comments:**

- There is insufficient funding for continual professional development efforts. (n=4) [The RPDPs have done an outstanding job with the funding provided.] [Budget cuts took a toll on our district's access to RPDP services. However, the RPDPs were instrumental in helping to train our own staff so we could carry on in their absence.] [The RPDPs have a strong impact on the teachers they work with; however, they have not been able to work with every teacher and administrator due to the high number of schools and teachers in each region, as well as the large geographic areas to be covered.]
- The RPDPs appear to do a pretty good job of training teachers and administrators. However, the RPDPs appear to be their own entity. (n=4) [The RPDPs should be working side by side with the Department.] [In a ideal system (i.e., if there was a strong State Board), the RPDPs would receive direction from the State Board, via the State Plan for Improvement.] [The RPDPs do not provide the training that is needed, as determined by the Department. The RPDPs work independently from the Department.]
- The elimination of the RPDPs would create an inequity for training. (n=3) [The RPDP has contributed enormously to our rural county. We simply could not provide our teachers and principals help in curriculum and instruction without the RPDP. This institution

has literally saved our educational system during the last two years of budget cuts.] [With the reduction from four to three, the RPDPs are less available to help local school districts and are less able to tailor the trainings to the needs of the smaller school districts.] [As rural districts, there is almost nothing else out there to help with training. The RPDP is a great program and should continue.]

- The training is not consistent across the State. (n=2) [No training is offered in certain areas of the State in certain subject areas (i.e., special education).]
- All teachers and administrators should be required to participate in the training offered. (n=1)
- Evaluations of teachers and principals should include how well the teachers and administrators actually use the training in the classroom and for administrative purposes. (n=1)
- All teachers and administrators in the State are able to receive direct training on the academic standards. (n=1)
- Student performance/outcomes do not justify satisfaction. (n=1)
- Time constraints of teachers are a big factor in insufficient training. (n=1)
- The RPDPs do a great job with what they have. If the academic standards did not keep changing so often, the RPDPs could do an even better job. (n=1)
- Teachers need more coaching/modeling to ensure the student outputs. (n=1)

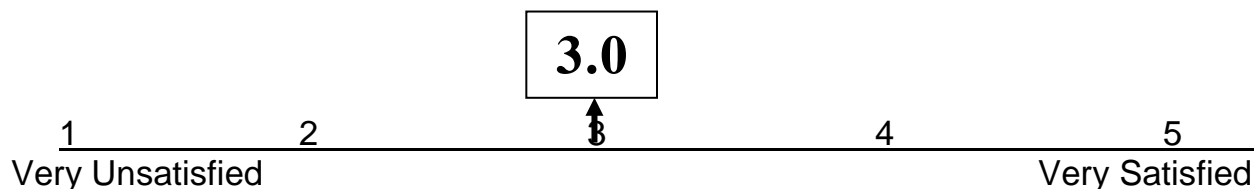
**How satisfied are you with the process for training teachers who teach kindergarten and grades 1, 2, or 3 on methods to teach fundamental reading skills for students in kindergarten and grades 1, 2, or 3? (n=42)**



**Comments:**

- There has been an effective Nevada Early Literacy Intervention Program (NELIP) training model in place for several years. (n=2) [We are pleased with the process of applying research-based literacy skills through ongoing collaboration among teachers and RPDP personnel. Through this process, teacher leaders are developed who sustain the growth.]
- I have never heard about this program, nor have I seen any data looking at the extent to which our 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students can read at grade level. Are the RPDPs really doing this? (n=2) [Our RPDP did not directly address this topic.]
- At this time, the regional training is spread very thin. (n=2)
- Teachers need more coaching/modeling to ensure the student outputs. (n=2) [We have schools where only reading programs have been used and when the programs went away, those teachers remain under resourced, having never learned how to teach reading beyond a script.] [The program should focus on phonics.]
- There are no measurable improvements in student achievement as a result of this training. (n=1)
- Time constraints of teachers are a big factor in insufficient training. (n=1)
- Our RPDP has excellent teaching/learning strategies. We have benefitted greatly from their expertise and willingness to help. (n=1)

**How satisfied are you with the statewide coordination of the RPDPs? (n=43)**

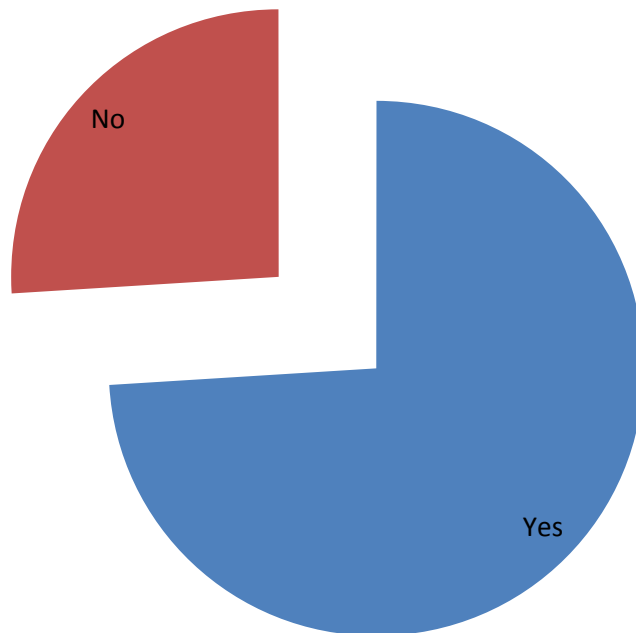


**Comments:**

- There is adequate communication among the three sites and each has maintained an autonomy that allows them to meet the needs of each unique region. (n=6) [One size does not fit all; each RPDP should address the needs of the districts they represent. The training does not need to be a duplication across the State.] [The Statewide Coordinating Council serves primarily as a communication entity. It is not necessary for each region to have the same training; it is desirable for each region to have the flexibility to best meet the needs of its member districts.]
- The RPDPs act independently, with little coordination among the other entities in the education governance structure. (n=3) [There is no coordination with the Department of Education, which is the most important entity for the RPDPs to coordinate with.] [The RPDPs should be tied to the Department to best incorporate academic standards.] [The RPDPs need more input from the Department.]
- The three RPDPs act independently; there does not appear to be a unified focus. (n=3)
- The Council appears to be a weak group, without any sense of purpose. (n=2)
- Coordinator's communication about professional development across the State is immensely important because of the distance and budget crisis. (n=1)
- The formal Statewide Coordinating Council should be abolished and the directors should be authorized to meet informally, as needed. (n=1)

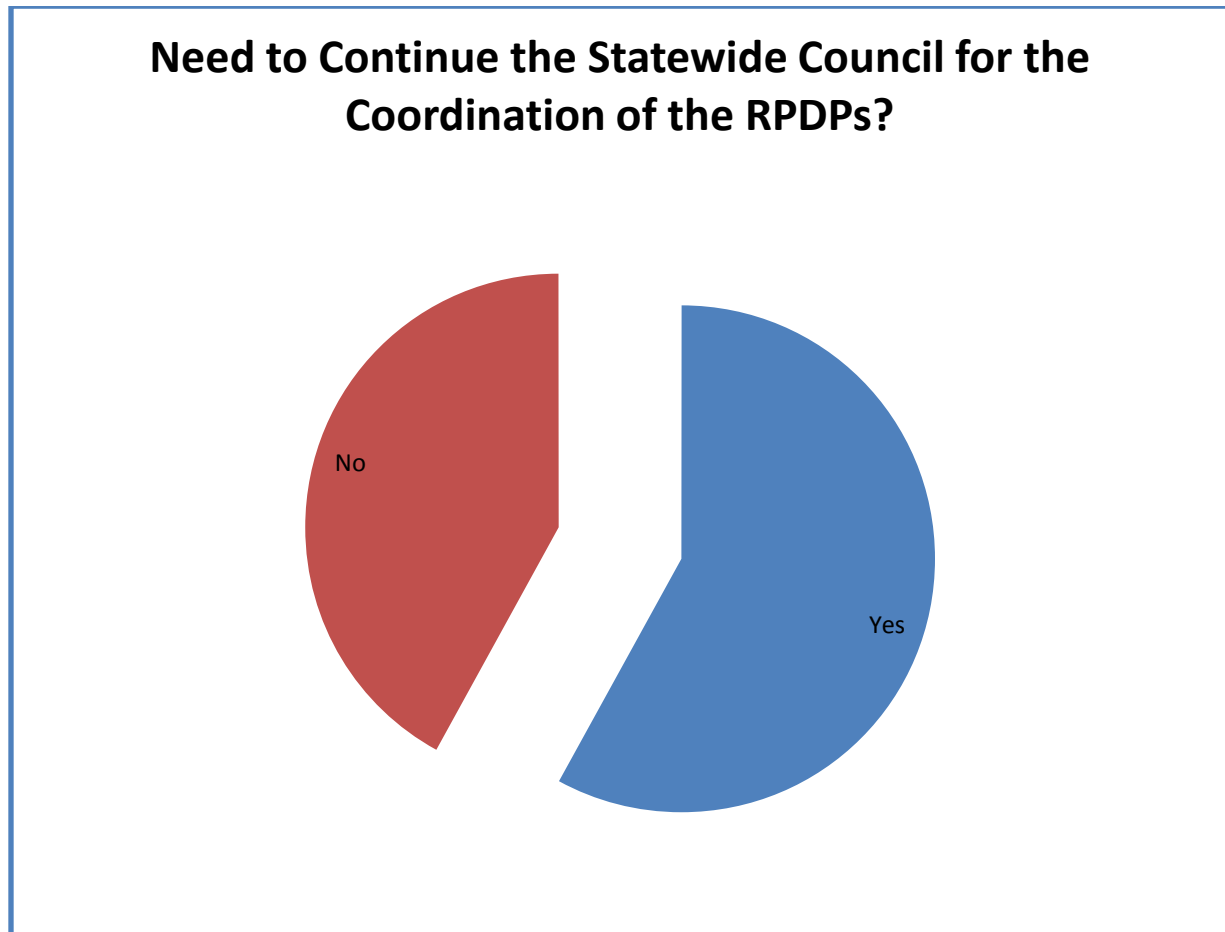
**Based upon your knowledge, is there a need in Nevada to continue the Regional Professional Development Program (RPDP) in its current form? (n=47)**

**Need to Continue the Regional Professional Development Program?**



|              |             |             |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Yes</b>   | <b>74%</b>  | <b>n=35</b> |
| <b>No</b>    | <b>26%</b>  | <b>n=12</b> |
| <b>TOTAL</b> | <b>100%</b> | <b>n=47</b> |

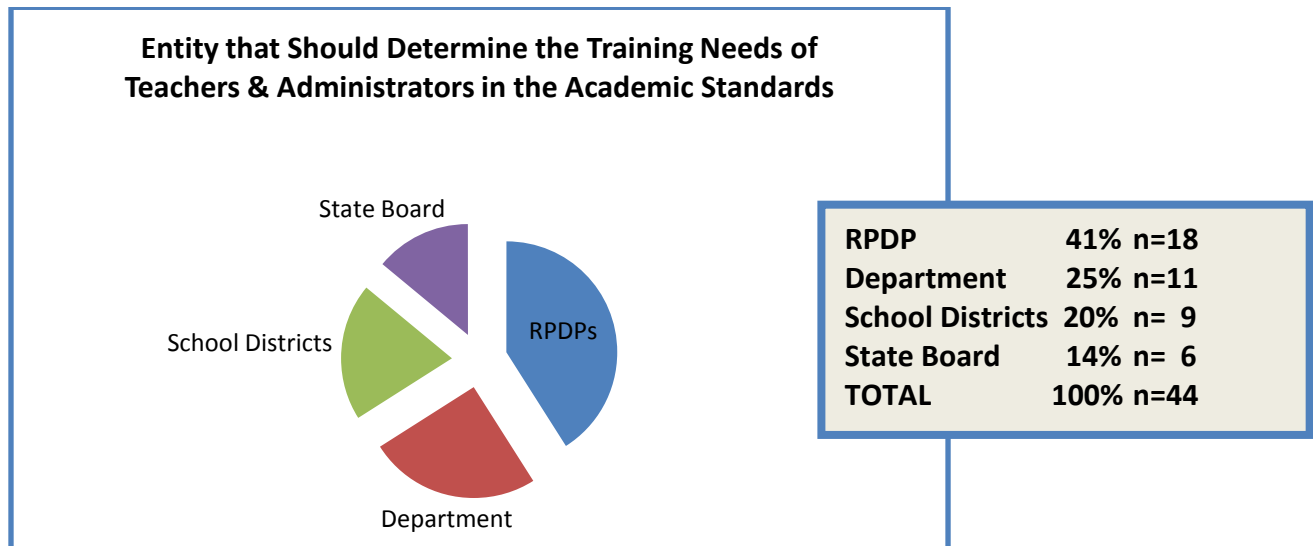
**Based upon your knowledge, is there a need in Nevada to continue the Statewide Council for the Coordination of the RPDPs in its current form? (n=40)**



|       |      |      |
|-------|------|------|
| Yes   | 58%  | n=23 |
| No    | 42%  | n=17 |
| TOTAL | 100% | n=40 |



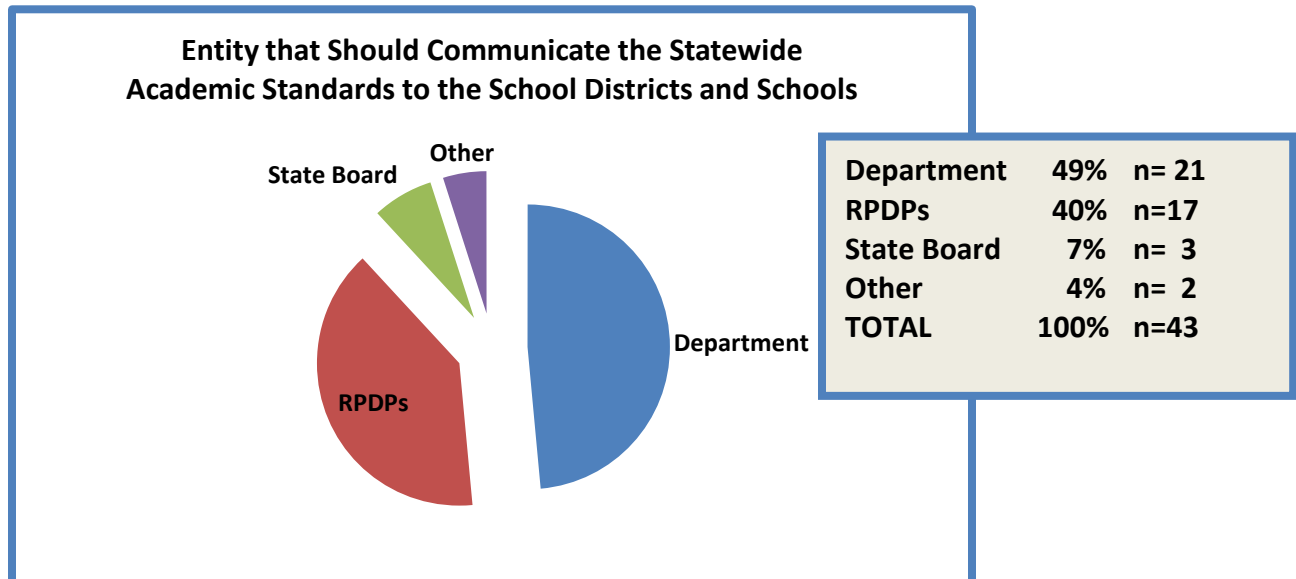
**Within your ideal system for public education governance, which entity should be primarily responsible for determining the training needs of teachers and administrators in the academic standards? (n=44)**



### **Comments:**

- Only the RPDPs, in consultation with the school districts, can align professional development to individual schools and district improvement plans. (n=9) [The State Board, Department, and the Academic Standards Council are too removed from the students.]
- The State Board and Department should determine the needs and the RPDPs should deliver. (n=4) [The determination should be based upon student performance data and should be reflected in the State Improvement Plan. With this data, the State Board should direct the Department and the RPDPs on the primary need for training on a statewide basis. The regions should look at the statewide data and determine if the needs of the region differ.]
- The Department should work directly with school districts, superintendents, and teachers to provide school and district level training. (n=1) [This would be in conjunction with a newly formed entity under the supervision of the State Superintendent.]
- All of the entities, including the colleges of education and the Commission on Professional Standards, should work together to determine the training needs. (n=1)

**Within your ideal system for public education governance, which entity should be primarily responsible for communicating the statewide academic standards to the school districts and schools? (n=43)**



### Comments:

- The RPDPs should communicate the standards to the school districts and schools. (n=4) [The RPDPs work directly with teachers and district administrators; the other entities do not.] [With input and assistance from the Department.] [The teachers and administrators should be mandated to attend the trainings.]
- The Department of Education should communicate the standards to the school districts and the RPDPs should provide the training. (n=3) [The schools districts also need to take some ownership.]
- The State Board should direct the process. (n=1)

**If the RPDP is continued, the following ideas represent revisions to increase the RPDP's effectiveness.**

- The RPDPs need additional funding. (n=15) [Additional personnel are needed, especially now that one regional RPDP was closed.] [All teachers at all grade levels need to receive the training.] [Need to provide more mentoring and coaching.] [The RPDPs need to focus training only on the standards.]
- The RPDPs need to coordinate better with other entities. (n=6) [The Department.] [The Academic Standards Council.] [The State Board.] [The State Board – only if the membership is revised.] [The trainings should link directly to school and district improvement plans.]
- In order for this to be an effective statewide program, teachers and administrators should be required to attend certain trainings. (n=4) [Additional contract days for teachers are needed.] [Teachers and administrators should be evaluated on their use of the training techniques taught.]
- There should be coordination and accountability from a source external to the RPDPs. (n=2) [The effectiveness of the trainings should be evaluated by an outside consultant.]
- The RPDPs need funds to allow the personnel of the RPDPs to stay current in standards-based instructional practices. (n=1)
- Administrator training should take into account what is desired by the school districts and the State administrator groups. (n=1)

- The principles for trainings should be driven, fundamentally, by analyses of the differences between goals and standards for student learning, and student performance. (n=2)  
[The trainings should link better to research-based practices.] [The courses need to be up-to-date and made easily available.]
- Provide for rural counties only. (n=1)
- For the NELIP, administrators must be included in the training. (n=1)
- For the NELIP, a teacher cadre of kindergarten and first grade teachers should be developed and there should be a partnership between the school districts and the RPDPs to support growth of students in the early grades. (n=1)
- If the NELIP still exists, it needs to be evaluated for effectiveness. (n=1)
- For the NELIP, there should be a focus on phonics. (n=1)

**If the RPDP is not continued, the following ideas represent how the functions of the RPDP could be continued.**

- The Department should provide the training. (n=4)  
[Professional development units should be created within the Department.] [The training would be more coordinated and consistent if provided by the Department.] [The new system should be well coordinated and accountable.]
- The State Board should have final approval over the Standards to be taught; the Department should provide the training to school districts. (n=1)

**If the Statewide Council for the Coordination of the RPDPs is continued, the following ideas represent revisions to increase the Statewide Council's effectiveness.**

- All interested groups should be included at the meetings. (n=6) [It would be helpful if the trainers could participate in the Council's meetings and share information.] [The Department must be included in the meetings.] [The Statewide Council needs to take direction from a revised State Board of Education.] [The State Superintendent should be the chair of the Statewide Council.]
- There should be accountability measures in place, measured by a source external to the Statewide Council. (n=1)
- There should be a common vision for statewide training on the academic standards. (n=1)
- The Statewide Council needs to evaluate the effect of the elimination of the Western RPDPs on statewide training. (n=1)

**If the Statewide Council for the Coordination of the RPDPs is not continued, the following ideas represent how the functions of the Statewide Council could be continued.**

- The Department, through the office of the State Superintendent, should oversee the coordination of standards training to teachers and administrators. (n=5)
- The governing bodies of the RPDPs should determine training based on district needs. (n=4)
- Keep an informal exchange among the regions. (n=2)  
[Networking between the regions is important.]
- Accountability for the program could be maintained through the Legislative Committee on Education or the Legislative Counsel Bureau. (n=1)