



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
(*Nevada Revised Statutes 218.5352*)
September 25, 2002
Las Vegas, Nevada**

The ninth meeting of the Legislative Committee on Education (*Nevada Revised Statutes* [NRS] 218.5352) for the 2001-2002 interim was held on Wednesday, September 25, 2002, at 9:30 a.m., in Room 4401 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada, and videoconferenced to the Legislative Building, Room 3138, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. Pages 3 and 4 contain the “Meeting Notice and Agenda.”

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN LAS VEGAS:

Senator William J. Raggio, Chairman
Senator Ann O’Connell
Assemblyman Mark A. Manendo
Assemblyman Wendell P. Williams, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN CARSON CITY:

Senator Bernice Mathews
Senator Maurice E. Washington
Assemblyman Marcia de Braga
Assemblywoman Dawn Gibbons

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT:

H. Pepper Sturm, Chief Principal Research Analyst, Research Division
Susan E. Scholley, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division
Carol M. Stonefield, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division
Brenda J. Erdoes, Legislative Counsel, Legal Division
Mary Alice McGreevy, Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division

Mindy Braun, Education Program Analyst for the Legislative Bureau of Educational
Accountability and Program Evaluation, Fiscal Analysis Division

MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

Name of Organization: Legislative Committee on Education
(*Nevada Revised Statutes* [NRS] 218.5352)

Date and Time of Meeting: Wednesday, September 25, 2002
9:30 a.m.

Place of Meeting: Grant Sawyer State Office Building
Room 4401
555 East Washington Avenue
Las Vegas, Nevada

Note: Some members of the Committee may be attending the meeting and other persons may observe the meeting and provide testimony, through a simultaneous videoconference conducted at the following location:

Legislative Building
Room 3138
401 South Carson Street
Carson City, Nevada

If you cannot attend the meeting, you can listen to it live over the Internet. The address for the Legislative Web site is <http://www.leg.state.nv.us>. For audio broadcasts, click on the link "Listen to Meetings Live on the Internet."

A G E N D A

- I. Opening Remarks
Senator William J. Raggio, Chairman
- *II. Presentation on the *American Diploma Project, Aligning High School Academic Standards with Higher Education and New Economy Needs*, and Related Matters
Sheila Byrd, Director, American Diploma Project, Achieve, Inc.
- *III. Presentation on Just For The Kids: Reporting and Analyzing Student Achievement Data and Impacts on Decision-Making and Best Practices, and Related Matters
Jim Lanich, Director, Western States, National Center for Educational Accountability
- *IV. Update on Parental Involvement Initiatives and Plans, Including Assembly Bill 201 from 2001 Session
Assemblywoman Debbie Smith
Barbara Clark, President, Nevada PTA
- *V. Report for Summer and Fall 2001 on Remedial Enrollments of Nevada High School Graduates in the University and Community College System of Nevada (UCCSN)
Dr. Jane Nichols, Chancellor, UCCSN

- *VI. Status Report on InSite Financial Analysis Model Program and Reports on School Districts and Charter Schools in Nevada
Mindy Braun, Education Program Analyst, Legislative Bureau of Educational Accountability and Program Evaluation (LBEAPE), Fiscal Analysis Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB)
- *VII. Update on Implementation of Federal Education Law – No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 – Briefing on Accountability and Sanctions
H. Pepper Sturm, Chief Principal Research Analyst, Research Division, LCB
- *VIII. Report on Implementation of Negotiated Settlement with Harcourt Educational Measurement, Inc., Related to Scoring Errors, Including Reimbursement for Costs, Identification of Drop-outs, and Related Matters
Dr. Lance Campbell, Measurement Consultant, Harcourt Educational Measurement, Inc.
Dr. Paul LaMarca, Director, Assessments, Program Accountability and Curriculum, Nevada Department of Education (NDE)
- *IX. Update on Early Childhood Programs, Including EvenStart (Senate Bill 585, 2001 Session)
Gloria Dopf, Assistant Deputy Superintendent, Special Education, ESEA, and School Improvement, NDE
Janie Lowe, Early Childhood Programs Consultant, NDE
- *X. Adjournment

*Denotes items on which the Committee may take action.

Note: We are pleased to make reasonable accommodations for members of the public who are disabled and wish to attend the meeting. If special arrangements for the meeting are necessary, please notify the Research Division of the Legislative Counsel Bureau, in writing, at the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada 89701-4747, or call Ricka Benum at (775) 684-6825 as soon as possible.

Notice of this meeting was posted in the following Carson City, Nevada, locations: Blasdel Building, 209 East Musser Street; Capitol Press Corps, Basement, Capitol Building; City Hall, 201 North Carson Street; Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street; and Nevada State Library, 100 Stewart Street. Notice of this meeting was faxed for posting to the following Las Vegas, Nevada, locations: Clark County Office, 500 South Grand Central Parkway; and Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue. Notice of this meeting was posted on the Internet through the Nevada Legislature's Web site at www.leg.state.nv.us.

OPENING REMARKS

Chairman Raggio called the meeting to order at 9:43 a.m., and requested the secretary to call the roll. Noting the lack of a quorum, the Chairman stated the meeting would commence as a subcommittee in order to proceed with scheduled testimony.

The Chairman announced a change in the meeting location for the Committee's November 20, 2002, the meeting. The Committee will convene in Carson City. He noted that the remaining three meetings of the Committee are now scheduled to be held in Carson City, and would be videoconferenced to the Las Vegas location.

PRESENTATION ON THE AMERICAN DIPLOMA PROJECT, ALIGNING HIGH SCHOOL ACADEMIC STANDARDS WITH HIGHER EDUCATION AND NEW ECONOMY NEEDS, AND RELATED MATTERS

Sheila Byrd, Director, *American Diploma Project*, Washington, D.C., discussed the primary aspects of the commitments and goals of the program, which is a unique collaboration of four national educational reform groups: The Hewlett Foundation in affiliation with Achieve, Inc.; The Education Trust; the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation; and the National Alliance of Business, that granted funding to five states. Ms. Byrd commented that a high school diploma does not guarantee students success in studies of higher education or in the workplace. She explained that the preparation and teaching of high school graduates is widely varied, and there is a need to establish a standardized

measurement of student achievement for colleges, employers, and the military, which all accept recent graduates.

During her testimony, Ms. Byrd referred to the report outlining the *Nevada Test Gap Analysis, Study Highlights*, and test results provided to the Committee. (Please refer to Exhibit A.) Ms. Byrd discussed Nevada's involvement with the *American Diploma Project*, which was initiated approximately one year ago, and specifically profiled the following:

- The *American Diploma Project* recognizes that standards-based reform represents the greatest prospect of ensuring equity and learning excellence for all K-12 children and would streamline the expectations of graduates.

With the goal of implementing quality benchmarks, the program was designed to help enhance continuing efforts of standards-based reform.

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- The *American Diploma Project* is working to examine and define the knowledge that can be expected from high school graduates by analyzing the quality of current educational standards and assessments.
- With reading, writing, and mathematics as the focal points, the *American Diploma Project* is identifying whether the content of the standards and the quality of the assessments contain an accurate reflection of the knowledge students have attained.

Ms. Byrd said an objective of the project is to challenge students to view the standards and assessments seriously. Oftentimes students do not associate that doing well on standards-based tests directly relates to their success once they leave high school. In response, the *American Diploma Project* made an effort to quantify the demands of employers, college educators, and the military. The substance of these demands/needs is then conveyed to state educators for evaluation and alignment with current standards and assessments, and to establish a benchmark against expectations. The benchmarks assist states to modify and/or reinforce current standards-based systems, and establish a method of analyzing the quality of current standards. In addition, Ms. Byrd offered that:

- The U.S. Department of Education statistics indicate that 75.2 percent of current high school students are immediately attending some form of post-secondary education, although many do not finish.
- Remediation and training costs have dramatically increased in all three of the target sectors.
- The recently compiled statistics compelled the *American Diploma Project* to define a set of expectations based on basic mathematic, reading, and writing skills that constitute proficiency; illustrating that even graduates going directly into the workforce would be prepared for higher-paying career and occupation options, which provide a trajectory for growth and a wider range of choices.
- Equivalent basic aptitudes and skills are a necessity for students to achieve success in either setting – higher education or the workplace.
- In the last five years, the two sets of expectations have converged, primarily due to advances in technology. For instance, technical literacy is required even for jobs or trades in manufacturing and service industries.

Ms. Byrd noted that 15 states originally responded to the request for proposal offered by the *American Diploma Project*. Five states were selected, including: Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Nevada, and Texas. The partner state leaders include: governors, department chiefs, higher education executives, and business leaders. There is agreement among the leaders for support of current standards-based systems and participation in reviewing current state standards and assessments. Additionally, the five partner states have agreed to consider the use of standards-based assessments in the college admissions and placement process, and employers have agreed to consider the data from these assessments in the hiring process.

The research conducted has focused on effectively using data to define: (1) the expectations for high-growth new

economy jobs in the workplace; (2) expectations required for higher education with immediate entry into credit-bearing coursework; and (3) assisting partner states to address legal issues with implications that may affect a K-16 system and the use of standards-based testing. The consideration of data may be used differently in each of the five states.

The technical assistance has included setting up effective K-16 councils to analyze standards and assessments and brokering information among the states in order to provide successful models. State policy panels have been implemented to research, review, and then classify the suitability of high school exit standards. Communication support consists of research papers, model legislation, and instructional tools for associates from the business sectors.

Continuing, Ms. Byrd discussed the research conducted in Nevada during its year-long involvement with the *American Diploma Project*. In January 2002, Nevada participated with representatives from the partner states, which included educators of English and mathematics in grades K-12 and higher education faculties, in assessment of a varied range of examinations. The tests included the high school proficiency examination (HSPE), the American College Test (ACT), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), and the General Educational Development (GED) published by the American Council on Education, as well as national and state college placement tests.

At present and in addition to the recent English and mathematics evaluation, the *American Diploma Project* is convening members from Nevada's higher education faculties drawn from studies involving humanities, sciences, and social sciences to evaluate the HSPE. The goal is to identify that the basic mathematics, reading, and writing expectations are recognized and that student abilities parallel what is expected in specific study areas. She noted that Achieve, Inc. provided the results from its recent alignment study. The purpose of the study was to identify the alignment of current standards to the state proficiency tests and to detect any disparities in content, thus providing additional assurance that the content of the standards-based tests is actually what higher education institutions anticipate.

The goal of the extensive research is to provide the partner states with a combination of the results from the higher education expectations and the workplace expectations, and to encourage discussion of potential issues the state may need to review. Ms. Byrd made special note to commend the effective collaboration of Nevada's state leaders including those involved in K-12 studies and higher education executives, along with the involvement of the business and military sectors.

During its second year, the *American Diploma Project* will conclude the "state-based phase" and proceed with a "cross-state advisory process." This phase incorporates involvement from the five partner states and moves forward to establish a national panel of policy and content experts to evaluate the efforts of the partner states and define and approve a set of mathematical, reading, and writing benchmark standards to be utilized by all states. Ms. Byrd stated that many state educators and policymakers are specifically requesting some type of "resource benchmark standards" to assess the quality of their own current standards-based systems.

Ms. Byrd outlined emerging state issues that Nevada's policymakers may wish to consider: (1) diversifying state economies; (2) establishing a required "college preparatory" high school curriculum; and (3) using data effectively to track performance of students in higher education relative to their standards-based assessment scores.

The *American Diploma Project* has encountered a number of challenges during its implementation in Nevada. Ms. Byrd discussed:

- The historic concern of involving the business sector in an educational endeavor; the realization has surfaced that workplace expectations do not necessarily focus primarily on core academic skills. The business benchmarks have been well received by employers and have extended further to employers identifying and encouraging emphasis on themes such as critical thinking and data statistics.
- The focus of the *American Diploma Project* remains on the core literacy skills. Future benchmarks may be established for additional subjects including art, history, and science, if the funding remains.
- The *American Diploma Project* reasons that the new academic benchmarks are good for all children, and deem fairness in the requirement that all students meet academic expectations.

In her explanation of “Nevada’s Progress Report,” Ms. Byrd outlined the need to:

- Examine the content of the HSPE and other college entrance and placement assessments;
- Establish a new P-16 Council; and
- Analyze the alignment between HSPE and state content and performance standards.

Ms. Byrd emphasized that the collaboration of efforts and involvement of a cross-section of sectors has served to streamline the process of establishing benchmarks. The next juncture involves the consideration of the *American Diploma Project* research by Nevada’s P-16 Council and possible discussion of recommendations for policy changes. Ms. Byrd explained the next phase should include the following steps:

- The P-16 Council will make necessary recommendations for admissions/placement and hiring policy changes;
- Nevada will participate in the cross-states advisory process for the *American Diploma Project*; and
- Examination and redefinition of the content of the HSPE will be conducted to reflect workplace and higher education expectations.

Referring to redefining the HSPE, Ms. Byrd stated it might be possible that changes be applied within the existing framework for test item development; additionally, it may be possible to augment the HSPE with content determined by the *American Diploma Project* or by state policymakers.

Chairman Raggio asked for clarification of the need to redefine the HSPE. Ms. Byrd explained the objective in convening the faculties from higher education is for them to determine to what extent the current HSPE reflects demands and expectations that students will encounter from professors and possibly in workplace settings.

Chairman Raggio raised concern with the portion of the report that suggests the writing exam be combined with the reading portion of the HSPE. (Please see page 7 of Exhibit A.)

Ms. Byrd summarized the impetus for the recommendation was that current ACT and SAT, as well as many college placement tests, do not test writing ability. She noted that writing is an element that higher education faculty deems a major factor and one of concern. The faculty members suggested combining the tests or, at the very least, the reading and writing scores, which would provide clear evidence of the students’ writing ability.

Directing his comments to representatives from the Nevada Department of Education (NDE), who served as participants on the Nevada Review Team, Chairman Raggio noted the “Executive Summary” states that reviewers of the English Language Arts portion of the HSPE found the overall level too low to indicate readiness for college. (Please refer to page 1 of Exhibit A.) He questioned whether the level of the HSPE was also too low to indicate readiness for entering the job market for those individuals not planning to attend college.

Additionally, referring to the bottom of page 6 of Exhibit A, the Chairman pointed out that Nevada’s own Review Team assessed that 74 percent of the test questions of the reading portion are set at the 4th to 8th grade level. Chairman Raggio emphasized there should be no question that a high school graduate would be tested at anything other than high school level. The analysis clearly displays that the test questions are at odds with the concept of “standards-based testing.”

Richard Vineyard

Richard Vineyard, Assistant Director, Standards/Curricula and Assessments, NDE, Carson City, responded to the Chairman’s comments. Mr. Vineyard explained there have been significant changes and upgrades in the reading portion of the test. He clarified that the course of study version of the HSPE taken by students who graduated up to

Spring 2001, and the “standards-based” version of the test to be taken by students who will graduate in June of 2003, are clearly different.

Chairman Raggio noted the timeframe for the state standards to be included in the HSPE was anticipated for school year (SY) 2003, and questioned whether that objective would be achieved. Additionally, he asked for the reasoning that three quarters of the reading portion of the test questions to be situated at 4th to 8th grade levels. Further, he questioned why the NDE determines this to be an acceptable situation.

Mr. Vineyard reiterated that the version of the HSPE that seniors will take this year, primarily the reading passages, is significantly longer and more difficult. Much work has been done to ensure that the items created for those questions are written to the 12th grade exit standards, rather than the earlier grade standards.

The Chairman expressed the magnitude of importance that the Committee remain cognizant of the standing of the state’s education system; and he reiterated that Nevada’s Review Team evaluated the current HSPE, and concluded Nevada’s 11th grade students proficient to a reading level of 4th to 8th grade. He termed the situation extremely “troubling” and that by all indications, during the last five years the state education system has made little progress in aligning with the standards.

Mr. Vineyard testified the HSPE that was analyzed in January 2002 was based on the course of study approved in 1994. The graduates of SY 2003 will be the first class of students expected to meet the education standards adopted in 1998.

Chairman Raggio said the figures indicate that only 83 percent of 11th grade students passed the reading portion of the HSPE, meaning that one in five 11th grade students could not pass the reading portion. He questioned if the school districts recognize these statistics as a problem and if the districts implemented curriculum changes. Additionally, he asked Mr. Vineyard whether the NDE has developed a method of monitoring curriculum changes to ensure the students will be prepared to meet the higher level of testing,

In response to an inquiry from Senator O’Connell, Ms. Byrd said only employers in the United States (U.S.) were involved in developing the work force expectations. She indicated many of the businesses and corporations involved with the *American Diploma Project* have offices outside the U.S., although foreign-based companies have not contributed to the development of workplace expectations to this point.

Senator O’Connell encouraged consideration of that this subject area to ensure Nevada’s students will graduate with the aptitude necessary to succeed in a “transient and fast-paced world.” She commented on the need of addressing issues that relate to parental involvement, student responsibility, and development of work ethic, and incorporating these concepts into classroom curriculum. She said the expectations of what parents, students, and teachers are accountable for must be absolutely clear.

Ms. Byrd’s presentation was aided by use of a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation referenced as Exhibit A, herein.

Ray Bacon

Ray Bacon, Director, Nevada Manufacturers Association (NMA), Carson City, recognized the efforts of the *American Diploma Project* to initiate national studies in conjunction with the National Alliance of Business to identify the requirements of various employment sectors.

Until recently, there had been no analysis of the employment requirements considered necessary for the tourism and travel industries. Mr. Bacon stated that recent discussions with gaming and tourism employers and executives have indicated a dramatic increase in specific workplace expectations and requirements associated with the gaming sector.

Anne Loring and Nancy J. Hollinger

Anne Loring, Member, Board of Trustees, Washoe County School District (WCSD), Reno, Nevada, and Nancy J. Hollinger, President, Board of Trustees, WCSD, responded to Chairman Raggio’s inquiry pertaining to

implementation of curriculum changes by Nevada school districts.

Ms. Loring told the Committee the WCSD has progressively implemented changes to the core curriculum for mathematics to be in line with the new standards and the anticipated requirements for alignment with the HSPE under the Nevada Education Reform Act of 1997. The most notable change includes the prerequisite for a year each of high school algebra and geometry. Previously, the only mathematic requirement was one high school credit for either consumer or general mathematics.

Dr. Gene Butler

Dr. Gene Butler, Assistant Director, Innovations and Operations, K-12 Mathematics and Science, Clark County School District (CCSD), Las Vegas, apprised the Committee of curricula-related changes implemented by the District. He outlined the Algebra 8 Program now in place, and indicated the expectation is that by SY 2007 there will be a 100 percent enrollment of CCSD students in the program. Also, the CCSD has implemented a three-year mathematics requirement for high school graduation.

John Mundy

John Mundy, Executive Director, Nevada Council on Economic Education, Las Vegas, emphasized the importance of incorporating the component of economic curriculum into the state's education standards. Mr. Mundy stated he has been in contact with Nevada's U.S. Senator Harry Reid's office in Washington, D.C., to monitor the progress of passage of an amendment containing an appropriation. He indicated that grant funds would be available to the states under the No Child Left Behind Act 2001, Title IV, Part D, Subpart 13, to support certain professional development components.

In response to a question posed by Assemblywoman Gibbons regarding which employment fields demand the largest number of graduates, Mr. Mundy said that economic education facilitates students to make well-chosen decisions as to career choices. Although he did not provide the information Mrs. Gibbons requested, he commented that as the Nevada economy diversifies, the number of Nevada jobs outside the gaming and tourism sectors will continue to increase and that students will benefit from learning how to prosper in a more entrepreneurial-type economy.

Mr. Mundy stated he has been working on a project in conjunction with the NDE and the Nevada Commission on Economic Development that has secured a grant from the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, Kansas City, Missouri, to bring diversity in terms of entrepreneurship to Nevada and create a knowledge base for students seeking to develop their own businesses.

Grant Hudlow

Grant Hudlow, Chief Executive Officer, Allied Science, Inc., Pahrump, commended the work of Ms. Byrd and the *American Diploma Project*. Mr. Hudlow also expounded on Senator O'Connell's comment regarding the need for parental involvement.

Mr. Hudlow described a writing program developed in the Pahrump area. The program involves students ranging from 9 to 20 years of age, and encourages them to write about any subject or topic, and is very creative in nature. The results of their first assignments contained massive spelling errors and "grammar considered to be abominable." Within a year, spending just one hour a week performing writing exercises, listening to the suggestions of editors, and correcting spelling, the group has produced several professional-caliber writers. Mr. Hudlow pointed out that the effectiveness of the nontechnical approach to education did not require a four-year college English class.

Mr. Hudlow briefly outlined a second successful alternative teaching program that proved very effective in working with children with behavioral problems or learning difficulties. The course utilizes interactive software during a two-hour classroom instruction period and extensive work assignments to be completed as homework.

**PRESENTATION ON "JUST FOR THE KIDS:
REPORTING AND ANALYZING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT DATA AND
IMPACTS ON DECISION-MAKING AND BEST PRACTICES,"**

AND RELATED MATTERS

James Lanich

James Lanich, Director of the Western States, National Center for Educational Accountability (NCEA), Rancho Palos Verdes, California, described the “Just For The Kids” (JFTK) Program as a state-based academic data analysis and research process created in Texas in 1999. The program is now available in several states and expanding throughout the U.S. With the use of a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation (Exhibit B), Mr. Lanich began by stating the undertaking was structured to use state accountability programs to improve public education systems. Mr. Lanich’s discussion focused on the following components of the program:

- The JFTK model is intended to concentrate on the positive characteristics and policies of a state’s individual school districts to provide comprehensive and straightforward methods each district may employ to benefit from the analysis and research.
- Attention is centered on the strengths or weaknesses and academic potential of each school in every district throughout the state. By concentrating first on student level performance, then grade level, and finally subject area, the system connects similar schools throughout the state in an effort to benchmark and transfer best practices to each other.
- The joint efforts of JFTK, the Education Commission of the States, and the University of Texas at Austin, launched the National Center for Educational Accountability.
- The Center accommodates over 12 million student records from five states and works to link student records to accurately depict school performance. The performance data is used to identify best practices and conducts research to identify high-performing schools.

The JFTK program has developed two approaches to establishing the standards in a particular state. The type of data collected at the statewide level determines the entry point for establishment of the JFTK model in a given state.

The components which differentiate the quality of the JFTK data collection model from other research systems is the “student level data picture” and includes:

- Precisely tracing the effects of specific state policies;
- Recognizing how student mobility impacts a school’s performance;
- Identifying consistently high-performing schools and pinpointing their effective best practices;
- Providing a fair comparison between middle and high schools based on preparedness of students; and
- Recognizing the early learning practices that contribute to later student success.

Mr. Lanich introduced his colleague, Mr. Ross Santy who provided the Committee with an overview of a JFTK school information model.

Ross Santy

Ross Santy, Deputy Director, National Center, Western States Region, JFTK, Pasadena, California, used as an example a 3rd grade elementary class to illustrate specific features of the data collected and explained the significance each aspect represented. Mr. Santy continued with the Microsoft PowerPoint presentation utilized by Mr. Lanich (please refer to Exhibit B), and informed the Committee that compiled data is not useful on its own; it is the manner in which it is presented that attributes to its value.

Explaining the data illustrated on the first three charts, Mr. Santy detailed:

Bar Chart, Bar No. 1 - demonstrates the performance at the grade level within the school. The data denotes what percentage of students passed the California Standards Test (CST) and what percentage of students were proficient, which is a high standard of the CST. The test results include every student tested, regardless of the amount of time they have attended the school and without regard to specific teachers.

Bar Chart, Bar No. 2 – demonstrates the performance of students who have been continuously enrolled in the school; most states use a three-year factor. This data can only be accurately obtained when the full student level data is available. Usually, the proficiency percentages increase, meaning, the longer period of time students attend one school, the better they perform on the tests.

Bar Chart, Bar No. 3 – represents the average scores of the ten highest-performing comparable schools in the state. This data depicts a quantifiable achievement gap, which demonstrates that if other schools with similar student populations can achieve, it is reasonable for educators to expect that their school can meet expectations as well. It was noted that the top comparable schools had equal or greater percentages of economically disadvantaged and limited English proficient students.

The goal of JFTK is to: (1) decipher the data; (2) identify other schools in the state that have a similar or higher percentage of hard to educate students; (3) determine how they are scoring; and (4) identify which successful practices are working in those schools.

Once the data is interpreted and coordinated into an accurate portrayal of the performance proficiencies based upon student demographic information and the state standards, JFTK begins to establish methods of sharing the best practices of the highest-achieving schools. The JFTK data system identifies sustained high performance in districts, schools, and classrooms throughout the state; then by conducting survey research through site visits, JFTK also identifies what the administrators and teachers are doing differently. These results are shared through various programs, on-line, and through “e-learning programs” designed for educator and public audiences.

Mr. Santy noted that with student level information systems such as JFTK, what is meant by “high performing schools” is, in essence, high-performing grade levels and classrooms within those schools, which have been identified by specific subject areas.

The sharing of the best practice results through the JFTK data system differentiates data determined to be most beneficial from comparable grade levels, which are achieving higher student performance but have similar, or more challenging demographics. During the comprehensive site visits, teams of teachers and the JFTK team identify the best practices of successful academic curriculum.

The on-line information accessible on high-performing districts, schools, and classroom data is categorized very efficiently so educators may duplicate or replicate the practices according to instructional and administrative strategies used with that specific best practice.

Concluding the presentation, Mr. Lanich pointed out that an additional benefit is that other studies can be carried out with the longitudinal data compiled, which would serve to link student performance to student enrollment over multiple years.

Chairman Raggio asked if the system has the capability to measure adequate yearly progress (AYP), in compliance with the provisions of H.R. 1, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), also referred to as the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

Mr. Lanich responded the AYP could be measured by grade level, although not by individual student. However, he noted it does comply with the federal legislation.

Responding to an additional inquiry from Chairman Raggio that addressed the issue of funding, Mr. Lanich said the funding mechanisms vary from state-to-state. Most states obtain financial grants from private contributors; in California, the Bank of American and American Telephone and Telegraph (AT&T) provide the funds. Mr. Lanich indicated that should Nevada be interested in participating, the initial startup cost would be approximately \$100,000

for the first year.

Senator O'Connell questioned whether the program had a method to monitor parental involvement, and if subject matter content of the material a teacher utilizes could be measured.

In response, Mr. Lanich stated parental involvement could be included as an aggregate field in the data set, which compares the variables used as an assessment; and he did not view this as a complicated process. The second way parental involvement could be measured would be to include it in the best practice studies as "a parent analog"; this would illustrate what the best achieving schools are doing to encourage parental involvement.

Responding further to Senator O'Connell regarding the subject of student discipline, Mr. Lanich stated that in the best practice study and research, student discipline is determined to be a point of investigation at the school site level and is considered with regard to classroom management strategies. This category would be examined as one of the 75 variables used in the research to determine a school's best practices.

UPDATE ON PARENTAL INITIATIVES AND PLANS, ASSEMBLY BILL 201 FROM 2001 SESSION

Assemblywoman Debbie Smith

Assemblywoman Debbie Smith, Washoe County Assembly District No. 30, spoke on the value of parental involvement and representation associated in the decision-making processes of the Council to Establish Academic Standards for Public Schools and the Commission on Educational Technology.

Mrs. Smith reported that Assembly Bill (A.B.) 201, (Chapter 212, *Statutes of Nevada 2001*) passed during the last regular legislative session, and required the school districts and the State Board of Education to adopt parental policies based on the *National Standards for Parental/Family Involvement Programs*, as issued by the National PTA in May 1998. . Those policies have been developed and adopted with plans for implementation. Mrs. Smith discussed the next focus would center on parental involvement issues at the state level. Noting that there are similarities in circumstance between academic standards and parent involvement standards, Mrs. Smith stressed both are important components to student achievement.

Barbara Clark

Barbara Clark, President, Nevada PTA, Las Vegas, discussed research studies beginning as early as 1960, focusing on the significance of family and parent involvement. Family involvement has been proven to provide students with dramatic advantages through educational resources and guidance.

At the federal level during the 1970s, the Head Start and Follow Through Programs for preschoolers and early elementary school-age children identified that involvement of low-income parents directly related to successful achievements in the early grades. Ms. Clark noted that research conducted during the 1970s indicated high-risk students made tremendous strides following the addition of parental involvement as a component to improve schools and increase student success.

Ms. Clark and Assemblywoman Smith provided information compiled by Joyce L. Epstein, (please refer to Exhibit C), which outlines policies and actions that can be implemented to improve family-school connections and parental involvement programs. Ms. Clark and Mrs. Smith briefly discussed each of the policy items:

1. Write a policy that outlines and discusses the state's commitment to parental involvement.
2. Establish a clearinghouse, library, and dissemination office of parental involvement practices and research.
3. Promote state requirements for teaching credentials to include credits for completing at least one comprehensive course in family and school connections and the use of parental involvement in teaching.

4. Support state colleges and universities in the development of comprehensive pre-service and in-service teacher and administrator training courses for improving practices of parent involvement.
5. Encourage master teacher, mentor, lead teacher, or other career ladder programs to build a cadre of specialists in the use of parental involvement.
6. Establish funding including small grants and recognition programs, for school districts and teacher-administrator-parent teams in individual schools to develop and evaluate comprehensive programs in parent involvement over several years.
7. Support development of programs for special-need populations of parents.
8. Recognize and apply the work of community educators in programs to increase parental involvement in their children's education.
9. Recognize businesses that permit their employees to become involved in their children's education to strengthen the schools, the community, and the citizens and workers of the future.

Assemblywoman Smith informed the Committee she has submitted a bill draft request (BDR) for the 2003 Legislative Session to enhance methods for schools districts to address parental involvement issues.

Shari Pheasant

Shari Pheasant, Founder, Parent Patrol, Reno, Nevada, testified that she is an active and involved parent. The goals of the organization are to motivate, recruit, and guide parents to become involved with their child's school. The primary areas of focus are: (1) traffic safety; (2) sexual offender awareness; and (3) bullying and harassment in public school settings. The group offers education to parents and schools on situations that may occur at school concerning safety issues and how they can affect education and standards. Ms. Pheasant emphasized that parental involvement is noticeably missing from school discipline and safety concerns. She stated that school safety affects enrollment, standards, and the success of the goals set by the educational systems.

Ms. Pheasant noted the successful efforts of schools that have implemented policies that include parents in basic school safety programs, such as playground supervision, and before and after school patrol. She cited the program's seven-year history boasts 130,000 hours of parental volunteerism on the part of family members, parents, and grandparents, to address school safety matters. School records have substantiated decreases in the number of student detentions, fighting between students, destruction of property, and at-risk behaviors by students when parental involvement is prevalent.

Sally Devlin

Sally Devlin, citizen of Pahrump, cited the lack of organizations and programs to encourage parental involvement in the rural counties. Ms. Devlin noted there are 1,400 students attending school in rural Nye County, 5,500 students in Pahrump, and 500 students being home-schooled; however, little consideration is given to enhancing programs to draw parents into the educational process. Additionally, she noted that student discipline continues to be a major concern of rural residents.

Moises Denis

Moises Denis, interested parent, Las Vegas, spoke briefly on the topic of parental involvement, and his investment of time and effort encouraging parents' participation in the education process of their children. Mr. Denis served as past Chairman, Commission on Educational Technology, and was instrumental in implementing many of the policies of the CCSD.

Additionally, Mr. Denis suggested state-level implementation of programs aimed specifically to draw fathers into the parental involvement equation. He pointed out that resource options could be easily accessed by all school districts, if programs had oversight and support from the state level. He recounted the successes following the state-wide team

efforts of the Commission on Educational Technology and said similar policies could be used to successfully bring parents into the system.

Chairman Raggio commented on the successful involvement of many Nevada legislators in America's Legislators Back to School Week program. The event, sponsored by the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), designated the week of September 16, 2002, encouraged state legislators across the country to visit schools to talk about their state's legislative process. The Chairman spoke to a class of 4th grade students and used the opportunity to spend time with a group of teachers. He commented that parental involvement is the single most important factor in a child's education; the extent to which a parent participates in a student's learning process has direct bearing on their success rate.

Chairman Raggio noted the frustration of teachers who fail repeatedly in attempts to reach the parents of struggling students. He restated his earlier recommendation to implement a form of grading parents on their level of involvement, adding that many parents do not provide the appropriate guidance their children require. Citing that the children who are not prepared for school either in appearance or completed homework are oftentimes the students who eventually drop-out.

Assemblyman Williams agreed with the Chairman regarding the complexity of reaching parents who put forth little effort into their child's education, and how educators can develop methods to emphasize the importance and role of education. However, he also noted the difficulty many parents may encounter in taking time from work to attend parent-teacher conferences. He encouraged Nevada to look at parental involvement policies that have been successful in other states. Mr. Williams indicated the need for legislation that would require employers to allow parents time away from their jobs for parent-teacher conferences.

**REPORT FOR SUMMER AND FALL 2001 ON REMEDIAL
ENROLLMENTS OF NEVADA HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES IN THE
UNIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM OF NEVADA (UCCSN)**

Dr. Jane Nichols

Dr. Jane Nichols, Chancellor, UCCSN, directed the Committee to the report dated January 24, 2002, compiled by the UCCSN (referenced as Exhibit D), and provided additional comments on several of the findings. She told the members they could expect the report on June 2002 graduates by January 2003, noting that it takes a three-month period to assemble the data once the figures are received.

Dr. Nichols testified the UCCSN employs various methods of testing to determine student readiness. In June 2002, the UCCSN Board of Regents received a detailed report from the most common manufacturer of ACT, used for placement and remedial courses. The Board announced its commitment to review all of its testing methods to ensure their clarity. Dr. Nichols outlined pertinent test characteristics that affect results:

- The majority of remedial students or individuals enrolled in developmental courses are not recent high school graduates, but rather those returning to school after some time.
- There is a clear correlation between the subject matter of the most recent course taken and the performance on a test, primarily evident on mathematic scores.
- Most students need remediation in one subject area. Twenty-seven percent of recent high school graduates required remediation in two or more areas; the primary areas of remediation are English and mathematics at all institutions. Three of the community colleges include a remedial reading course.

In the fall of 2001, the percentage of recent high school graduates (going on to college) who were placed in remedial courses was 36 percent. The growth over the last two-year period represents an increase from 26 percent to 31 percent, then climbing to 36 percent.

She noted that the ACT and SAT test documents ask students if they see themselves requiring additional help in

certain subject areas; over 30 percent of the students feel they will require more study in English and mathematics. She stated this denotes either a lack of confidence or insecurity by our graduates regarding their own proficiency.

Dr. Nichols termed the scores reported as “a terrible situation” for Nevada as well as the university system. She said the focus of the UCCSN would be to develop and implement plans that will aid students in their preparation for college. For example, the UCCSN is compiling a brochure for distribution to all Nevada’s 6th and 7th grade students, which outlines every class needed for college entrance, and the high school year the student should take the class. The brochure is printed in English and Spanish, poster size, for use by parents and students together.

Additionally, Dr. Nichols said the UCCSN uses the English ACT as its placement method; the test indicates whether the student has taken the core curriculum subjects. The ACT clearly describes core curriculum as humanities, mathematics, social sciences, and sciences. Statistics indicate that of the students who have taken what ACT deems the core curriculum courses, 100 percent of the students score at 21 or above; of the students who have not taken the core curriculum courses, 100 percent score below 21. Dr. Nichols stated the predictive factor is the courses students take and their performance in those classes.

She emphasized that it is imperative for students to take college preparatory courses including mathematics beyond algebra II for example, (trigonometry, geometry, and pre-calculus), and humanities classes with extensive reading and writing elements. The English courses should require emphasis on literature, as well as composition and grammar. Also, students who fail to take mathematics in their senior year are more likely to be placed in a remedial university course, since statistics indicate that mathematic skills tend to deteriorate over time.

The UCCSN has had a primary role in bringing the *American Diploma Project* to the state. Dr. Nichols outlined Nevada’s goal to identify a test, like the HSPE, which high school students may use as an indicator of classes necessary to prepare for college. She noted that educators, and the system in general, have not sufficiently communicated to students which classes are needed.

Dr. Nichols briefly discussed the consensus of the UCCSN Board of Regents and the NDE regarding the development of the K-16 Council, which is composed of representatives from a wide educational spectrum, including K-12 administrators/educators, higher education administrators/executives, legislators, and members of the business community, parents, and PTA associates. A central focus of the statewide K-16 Council is the issue of student transition from high school to college in an effort to ensure that educators are doing everything possible.

Concluding, Dr. Nichols said the K-16 Council anticipates that when the *American Diploma Project* concludes its appraisal and modification of Nevada’s HSPE, it will prove to be stringent enough for use as the prime indicator of college readiness. She noted that with the combining the Council’s efforts and the enhanced academic-preparatory curricula offered by the school districts, the number of remedial students should decrease.

Dr. Nichols confirmed for Chairman Raggio that in many states, remedial courses can only be taken at the community college level.

Senator O’Connell questioned whether the UCCSN was implementing programs to strengthen and increase the content matter required for students planning to become teachers.

Dr. Nichols said she was proud to report that both UCCSN campuses and the Great Basin College in Elko, Nevada, have been proactive in terms of the national trends to fortify teacher content knowledge. The work began with National Science Foundation grants, which required the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Science to be directly involved with the teacher education program. Research demonstrates that extensive involvement in teacher education is essential to producing teachers strong in their content subject. The UCCSN is diligent to ensure that all faculty members view teacher education as a priority.

**UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF FEDERAL
EDUCATION LAW — NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND ACT OF 2001
BRIEFING ON ACCOUNTABILITY AND SANCTIONS**

H. Pepper Sturm

H. Pepper Sturm, Chief Principal Research Analyst, Research Division, LCB, provided the Committee with its third briefing on the recently enacted federal legislation. Noting the Chairman's announcement of time constraints, Mr. Sturm provided a condensed version of his full report. He said he would address only the key points of the accountability and sanctions provisions of H.R. 1, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. (Please refer to Exhibit E for Mr. Sturm's entire presentation.)

Mr. Sturm provided an overview of Nevada's current accountability law, which could be characterized as a report card system completed at the school and district level. The main purpose is to identify low-performing schools, target the need for additional assistance, and to provide parents with information on how the schools are performing.

Mr. Sturm noted that the philosophy of H.R. 1 serves to expand the concept of accountability and he summarized the provisions as defined under the ESEA. He noted that the sanctions portion of the provisions would apply only to the Title 1 schools; remaining provisions under H.R. 1 require that:

- Each state have a single accountability system for both Title 1 schools and all other schools, and spell out the specific provisions of the accountability system.
- The states, the school districts, and the schools are to be held accountable at particular levels; expand the scope to the district and state level.
- States implement a statewide accountability system, which includes charter schools, and require states and districts to issue annual reports to the public.
- States, school districts, and schools must make adequate yearly progress toward having all students proficient in reading and mathematics by the 2013-14 school year (SY).

In addition, the Act specifies rewards for districts and schools that make progress, as well as corrective action for those that consistently fail to improve.

Mr. Sturm referred to page 2 of Exhibit D, which provides the following implementation deadlines: The exception was noted that Nevada has obtained a waiver on the first deadline for issuance of report cards to the public.

By the 2002-03 school year:

- Corrective actions apply to any school identified as in need of improvement under the 1994 ESEA reauthorization.
- States must set an adequate yearly progress "starting point" based on 2001-02 data.
- Districts must assess English Language Learners (called Limited English Proficiency students in the law) for their English proficiency.
- All states must participate in National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 4th and 8th grade reading and mathematics tests.

By the 2005-06 school year:

- States must have adopted standards for science. (Nevada currently complies.)
- Annual statewide assessments for reading and mathematics in grades 3-8 must be in place.

By the 2007-08 school year:

- Annual science assessments must be in place for each of the following grade spans: 3-5, 6-9, and 10-12.

Basically, states and school districts use two kinds of interrelated standards:

1. Standards that specify the content (what students have knowledge of and are able to perform at different points in their education); and
2. Standards that specify the academic achievement of students (how well students are able to perform what they have learned).

Briefly outlining the state's academic standards, Mr. Sturm focused on the following issues:

- The ESEA requires three levels – Nevada has four standards levels: Meets Standards, Exceeds Standards, Approaches Standards, and Below Standard.
- In addition to science standards, Nevada has its mathematics and reading standards in place.
- Nevada's state standards have been reviewed. During the analysis process, Nevada's Council to Establish Academic Standards for Public Schools addressed the policy concerns. Also, the *American Diploma Project* reviewed the HSPE and the Committee is aware of possible modifications.

Mr. Sturm identified the provision addressing Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as the area of most concern to Nevada's policymakers. Pointing out that states must define AYP so that all students improve their performance and achieve a state-defined "proficient" level within 12 years. States are also required to test 95 percent of all students within that 12-year period. The definition of AYP is left to the states and also applies to the subgroups specified in the Act:

- Economically disadvantaged students;
- Major racial or ethnic groups;
- Students with disabilities; and
- English Language Learners.

Mr. Sturm mentioned the following items for consideration for compliance with the AYP provisions:

- Nevada will have to revise its accountability system to reflect all provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act.
- An extensive amount of longitudinal tracking of students will also be necessary.
- Achievement will not be the only determining factor for the purpose of ranking schools.
- Methods of disseminating data and making it available at the school level will be necessary to ensure that students in each subgroup are adequately progressing.

Addressing the policy questions focused on the AYP provision, Mr. Sturm stated that:

- Nevada's Council to Establish Academic Standards for Public Schools has established proficiency levels only for benchmark grades of mathematics and science. Additional work will be required for achievement tests.
- The Committee and the NDE may find it necessary to make critical judgments as to the Statewide Management of Automated Record Transfer (SMART) system's ability to provide the extensive reports

required.

Concluding, Mr. Sturm summarized the corrective actions associated with the ESEA. (Stated in part below, please refer to page 13 of Exhibit D for the entire list of corrective actions):

- Schools that fail to meet AYP for two consecutive years must be identified as needing improvement. Technical assistance is to be provided and public school choice must be offered to their pupils by the next school year (unless prohibited by state law).
- Schools that fail to meet the state AYP standard for three consecutive years must offer pupils from low-income families the opportunity to receive instruction from a supplemental services provider of their choice.
- Schools that fail to meet AYP *for four consecutive years* must take one or more of a specified series of “corrective actions,” including: replacing school staff, implementing a new curriculum, decreasing management authority at the school level, appointing an outside expert to advise the school, extending the school day or year, or changing the school’s internal organizational structure.
- Schools that fail to meet AYP standards *for five consecutive years* must be “restructured.” Such restructuring must consist of one or more of the following actions: reopening as a charter school, replacing all or most school staff, state takeover of school operations (if permitted under state law), or other “major restructuring” of school governance.
- Procedures analogous to those for schools are to apply to districts that fail to meet AYP requirements. In particular, in instances where districts fail to meet AYP for four consecutive years, state education departments will be required to take corrective action, which can include offering students the choice to transfer to a higher-performing public school in another district.

Mr. Sturm encouraged the Committee to review the entire document to become familiar with the in-depth and specific details of the NCLB Act. He anticipates the working group (assigned by Chairman Raggio during the August 27, 2002, meeting of the Legislative Committee on Education) will submit its “concept document” for the Committee’s review. The policies developed will serve as the basis for a BDR for the 2003 Legislative Session, bringing Nevada into total compliance with the No Child Left Behind Act.

**REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT WITH
HARCOURT EDUCATIONAL MEASUREMENT, INC., RELATED TO
SCORING ERRORS, INCLUDING REIMBURSEMENT FOR COSTS, IDENTIFICATION OF DROP-OUTS,
AND RELATED MATTERS**

Chairman Raggio referred to the information provided to the Committee (please refer to Exhibit G). Noting the lack of additional information, Chairman Raggio indicated no formal presentation was necessary.

**UPDATE ON EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS,
INCLUDING EVENSTART (SENATE BILL 585, 2001 SESSION)**

Gloria Dopf and Janie Lowe

Gloria Dopf, Assistant Deputy Superintendent, Special Education, ESEA, and School Improvement, NDE, Carson City, introduced Janie Lowe, Early Childhood Programs Consultant, NDE, to present an overview of recently implemented programs. Ms. Dopf reviewed the funding approved during the 2001 Legislative Session, which appropriated \$3.5 million each year during the biennium for the enhancement and expansion of the Early Childhood initiatives. Ms. Dopf noted that with the additional funds, the NDE was able to commence comprehensive programs, building on programs that existed previously.

Ms. Lowe’s comments addressed the Early Childhood Education Comprehensive Plan, Nevada EvenStart (NEST),

and Classroom on Wheels (COW), indicating all were made possible under Senate Bill 585 (Chapter 565, *Statutes of Nevada 2001*).

- Studies indicate that children benefit from early childhood education by displaying school readiness, early scholastic achievement, and competence.
- The additional funds have allowed for initiation or expansion of the pre-kindergarten programs that utilize high-quality staff and curriculum in effective educational environments, while incorporating a parental involvement component.
- The Nevada Early Childhood Education (ECE) Comprehensive Plan went through a formal request for proposal process, with funds being awarded to the successful applicants in January 2002. The program utilizes quality indicators of program delivery and outcomes for evaluation of program effectiveness.
- Notification of subgrant awards was distributed in January and February 2002, with eight of the ten programs successfully providing direct services within that year. During Fiscal Year (FY) 02 a total of \$2,095,583 was awarded in subgrants. The awardees include:
 - Carson City School District;
 - Churchill County School District;
 - Clark County School District;
 - Douglas County School District;
 - Great Basin Community College;
 - Humboldt County School District;
 - Pershing County School District;
 - Sunrise Children's Hospital Foundation;
 - Washoe County School District; and
 - White Pine County School District.

Ms. Lowe noted that a literacy pilot project was implemented based on the partnership of the NDE, Clark and Washoe County School Districts, the Center for Accelerating Student Achievement, the Governor's Office, the Regional Professional Development Programs (RPDPs), and Riverdeep Interactive Learning Limited, which provides wide-ranging Web-based educational curriculum. The pilot project model is a professional development program that utilizes technology for teaching literacy concepts in early childhood.

The program's evaluation system was established in accordance with the clearly stated requirements set forth under Senate Bill 585. Ms. Lowe said the law provides that NDE shall provide an annual written report to the Governor, Legislative Committee on Education, and the Legislative Bureau of Educational Accountability and Program Evaluation. An extensive evaluation requirement guidebook has been prepared ensuring each facet of the programs is followed to the letter and accessible for analysis. The requirements include pre-assessment to post-assessment data, intake data forms, project descriptions and participant characteristics, and participation in services/outcomes. An independent evaluator was hired by the school districts; the evaluator is responsible for incorporating the requirements of Senate Bill 585 and developing a data collection system, which utilizes the quality indicators of program delivery and outcomes.

Ms. Lowe briefly reviewed the concepts of the NEST program, which she defined as intensive family literacy programs that originated five years ago. The elements of the program consist of adult education, parenting classes, early childhood education, and Parent and Child Time (PACT); participants include adults with an educational need, such as English as a Second Language (ESL) and, with at least one child, seven years of age or younger. This program also uses quality indicators of program and delivery outcomes for evaluation.

The final item discussed by Ms. Lowe was the Classroom On Wheels, or COW program. The program began in 1987; the need was identified for adequate preschool services in areas of Nevada, in particular, Clark County. The COW uses renovated school buses, painted to resemble cows, to provide preschool education in low-income neighborhoods. The COW program reaches children ages three, four, and five-years of age, most in need of the

developmentally appropriate, no-cost preschool. Statewide, the COW programs operate in Las Vegas, and Elko, Lyon, Storey, and Washoe Counties with the state providing partial funding for the continuation of the community-based preschool programs.

Chairman Raggio questioned the allocation and use of state funds for the seven pilot sites of the Nevada ECE Comprehensive Plan. He noted the cost of \$50,000 per site, which includes five sites in Clark County and two sites in Washoe County; and questioned whether a portion of the funds authorized under Senate Bill 585 is being utilized for the program. Additionally, he questioned the effectiveness of the Riverdeep educational products and if the appropriate evaluations of that specific program had been completed.

Ms. Dopf responded that pilot sites were funded from the original \$3.5 million of the ECE grant; \$500,000 was allocated to the NEST program, and \$350,000 was utilized for the ECE project as part of an early childhood comprehensive system being built by Clark and Washoe Counties for specific ECE purposes. She added that its focus is the early literacy and teacher-training component provided through the Riverdeep program.

Chairman Raggio further questioned the two-component system associated with Riverdeep, and inquired if it is considered to be an “off-the-shelf and on-line” professional development program for teachers.

Ms. Dopf stated that the \$50,000 was used to purchase the Riverdeep component of the larger early literacy collaborative and was applied toward the reading training element of the program; both are part of the entire process.

Chairman Raggio said the \$9 million was authorized for the RPDPs to implement the literacy program and was designed to train teachers in grades kindergarten through 3rd grade. He asked how the Riverdeep program differs from the Nevada Early Literacy Intervention Program (NELIP).

Ms. Dopf stated it is a supplemental tool and provides that the pilot sites be utilized for the focus of the early childhood aspect of the project, in addition to building the needs of teacher training for early childhood literacy delivery to become part of the system. She also said it “targets down further in grade range” compared to when NELIP comes into effect, and that it essentially was done as a part of the entire collaboration as an additional tool.

Ms. Dopf further explained that the Riverdeep programs came with a history that the Governor’s Office and others in the consortium were encouraging for use in Nevada. She added that it was her understanding the RPDPs from Clark and Washoe Counties were involved with Dr. McLaughlin, Superintendent of Public Instruction, NDE, in the decision to utilize the Riverdeep programs.

Chairman Raggio directed Ms. Dopf to meet with the Committee’s staff to clarify questions surrounding the association and involvement with the Riverdeep Interactive Learning Limited programs. He also asked that the same information be provided to staff regarding the Center for Accelerating Student Achievement to ensure the involvement of the appropriate RPDPs.

Responding to a question from Senator O’Connell focusing on recruitment methods for participants, Ms. Lowe stated that each program is responsible for its own recruitment and retention strategies; oftentimes enrollment results from contact by “word of mouth.” Ms. Lowe stated that the waiting list statewide for the ten ECE programs totals more than 300 children.

Senator O’Connell asked Ms. Lowe to furnish the Committee with the enrollment criteria for the program participants and what the outreach strategies involve.

Chairman Raggio called for public comment on any items discussed. There was no additional comment from the public. He outlined the upcoming meeting dates as October 23, 2002, November 20, 2002, and January 15, 2003, all to be held in Carson City.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business to come before the Legislative Committee on Education; Chairman Raggio adjourned the meeting at 1:09 p.m.

Exhibit H is the “Attendance Record” for this meeting.

Respectfully submitted

Ricka Benum
Senior Research Secretary

Susan E. Scholley
Senior Research Analyst

APPROVED BY:

William J. Raggio, Chairman

Date: _____

LIST OF EXHIBITS

Exhibit A was submitted by Sheila Byrd, Director, the *American Diploma Project*, Washington, D.C., and includes the following documents:

1. A report compiled by Patte Barth, the Education Trust, titled *Nevada – Assessing the Test Gap: Findings from the Gap Analysis for the American Diploma Project dated June 2002*; and
2. A copy of a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “*American Diploma Project*.”

Exhibit B is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “Using Accountability Systems to Improve Public Education,” submitted by Jim Lanich, Director, Western States, National Center for Educational Accountability, dated September 25, 2002.

Exhibit C was submitted by Assemblywoman Debbie Smith, Washoe County Assembly District No. 30, and Barbara Clark, President, Nevada PTA, Las Vegas, Nevada, and consists of the following:

1. A document titled “State Leadership for Parent Involvement – School, Family, and Community Partnerships – Preparing Educators and Improving Schools,” by Joyce L. Epstein; and
2. An informational packet addressing issues of parental involvement, provided by the Nevada PTA, Las Vegas, Nevada.

Exhibit D is a report titled *Remedial/Developmental Enrollments — Summer and Fall 2001*, prepared by the University and Community College System of Nevada (UCCSN), submitted by Dr. Jane Nichols, Chancellor, UCCSN, dated January 24, 2002.

Exhibit E is a briefing report prepared by H. Pepper Sturm, Chief Principal Research Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau, titled “Accountability and Sanctions Provisions of H.R. 1 (ESEA)”;

in addition, Mr. Sturm submitted the following documents:

1. A brief prepared by the Education Commission of the States, titled “No Child Left Behind Issue Brief – A Guide to Standards-Based Assessment”;

2. A brief prepared by the Education Commission of the States, titled “No Child Left Behind Policy Brief – Low-Performing Schools”; and
3. A letter from Rod Paige, U.S. Secretary of Education, Washington, D.C., dated June 14, 2002.

Exhibit F was submitted by Dr. Paul M. LaMarca, Director, Assessments, Program Accountability and Curriculum, Nevada Department of Education, and consists of the following documents:

1. A letter dated September 20, 2002, to the Legislative Committee on Education, and Senator William J. Raggio, Chairman, from Paul M. LaMarca, Ph.D., NDE, which outlines the communication from the NDE, to Nevada school districts regarding the April scoring error on the part of Harcourt Educational Measurement, Inc.;
2. The initial correspondence to the school districts in the form of a memorandum dated August 30, 2002, from Paul M. La Marca, Ph.D., NDE, the subject of which states: “Impact of April math scoring/reporting error”; and
3. The meeting agenda for the Nevada Association of School Superintendents dated Thursday, September 19, 2002.

Exhibit G was submitted by Janie Lowe, Early Childhood Education Consultant, Nevada Department of Education, and consists of the following:

1. A Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “Nevada Early Childhood Education (ECE) Programs, Office of Special Education, Elementary and Secondary Education, and School Improvement, Nevada Department of Education,” dated September 25, 2002;
2. A list of participants of the Nevada Early Childhood Education Comprehensive Plan, the Participants of the Nevada Early Start Family Literacy Programs, and Participants of the Classroom on Wheels Program, Coordinated by the Nevada Institute for Children;
3. A document downloaded from the BusinessWeek Online Web site, titled “25 Ideas For A Changing World – Society, *The Importance of Teaching Tots*”;
4. An article titled “Washoe County School District, Early Childhood Education Program;”
5. A letter to Mrs. Melany Trimble, preschool teacher, McGill Elementary School, McGill, Nevada, from Anne H. Wall, Ely, Nevada, dated May 28, 2002;
6. A copy of an initiative titled “EvenStart Statewide Family Literacy Initiative, Nevada Family Literacy Programs – Quality Indicators of Program Delivery”;
7. A pamphlet provided by the Washoe County School District, titled *Early Childhood Education Preschool Programs*; and
8. A pamphlet provided by the Mark H. Dawson, Child and Family Center, Great Basin College, Elko, Nevada, titled *The Best in the West*.

Exhibit H is the “Attendance Record” for this meeting.

Copies of the materials distributed in the meeting are on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau, Carson City, Nevada. You may contact the library at (775) 684-6827.