



NEVADA LEGISLATURE
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
(Nevada Revised Statutes 218E.605)

SUMMARY MINUTES AND ACTION REPORT

The second meeting of the Nevada Legislature's Committee on Education was held on Wednesday, March 2, 2016, at 9:30 a.m. in Room 4401, Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 3138, Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. A copy of this set of "Summary Minutes and Action Report," including the "Meeting Notice and Agenda" ([Exhibit A](#)) and other substantive exhibits, is available on the Nevada Legislature's website at <http://www.leg.state.nv.us/interim/78th2015/committee/>. In addition, copies of the audio or video record are available through the Legislative Counsel Bureau's Publications Office (e-mail: publications@lcb.state.nv.us; telephone: 775/684-6835) and may be available online at <http://www.leg.state.nv.us/Granicus/>.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN LAS VEGAS:

Assemblywoman Melissa Woodbury, Chair
Senator Becky Harris, Vice Chair
Senator Scott T. Hammond
Senator Joyce Woodhouse
Assemblyman Nelson Araujo
Assemblyman Randy Kirner
Assemblyman Lynn D. Stewart

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:

Senator Michael Roberson

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT:

Todd M. Butterworth, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division
Kristin Rossiter, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division
Risa B. Lang, Chief Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division
Karly O’Krent, Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division
Julie Waller, Senior Program Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division
Jaimarie Dagdagan, Program Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division
Adam Drost, Program Analyst, Fiscal Analysis Division
Christina Harper, Senior Research Secretary, Research Division

Items taken out of sequence during the meeting have been placed in agenda order.

AGENDA ITEM I—CALL TO ORDER

Chair Woodbury called the meeting to order. She welcomed members, presenters, and the public to the second meeting of the Legislative Committee on Education (LCE). Chair Woodbury provided opening remarks and testimony guidelines.

AGENDA ITEM II—PUBLIC COMMENT

Terri Rupp, National Federation of the Blind of Nevada, submitted written testimony in support of providing braille literacy services for blind or visually impaired children ([Exhibit B](#)). She submitted a copy of the publication *Future Reflections*, Volume 27, Number 2, National Federation of the Blind, 2008 ([Exhibit B-1](#)).

Steven Werlein, Ed.D., Principal, Nevada Connections Academy, provided written comments regarding online charter schools ([Exhibit C](#)). He expressed concern that the current graduation rate calculation penalizes schools who serve credit deficient students. Dr. Werlein supports continued conversation to ensure schools are not penalized retroactively or in the future. He emphasized the need to ensure accurate accountability systems.

AGENDA ITEM III—APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON FEBRUARY 10, 2016, IN LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

MOTION: Assemblyman Kirner moved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on February 10, 2016, in Las Vegas, Nevada. The motion was seconded by Assemblyman Stewart and passed unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM IV—OVERVIEW OF DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS IN NEVADA AND THE POSSIBLE IMPACT ON NEVADA’S K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Jeff Hardcastle, AICP, Nevada State Demographer, Office of the State Demographer, Department of Taxation, provided an overview of Nevada’s population and economics ([Exhibit D](#)).

There was discussion among Mr. Hardcastle and LCE members regarding the following:

- Nevada’s ability to handle the demands of population growth, education challenges, and workforce needs;
- Adequately preparing Nevada’s students for the workforce; and
- Water availability to meet population growth.

AGENDA ITEM V—OVERVIEW OF STATE AND FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS CONCERNING STUDENT ASSESSMENTS AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STUDENT ASSESSMENTS IN NEVADA’S K–12 PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Steve Canavero, Ph.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction, Nevada’s Department of Education (NDE), provided a brief overview of assessment systems and near-term and long-range assessment plans per the requirements in Chapter 389 (“Examinations, Courses, Standards and Graduation”) of NRS. He submitted the Smarter Balanced 2015 preliminary statewide summative results for math and English language arts in grades 3–8 ([Exhibit E](#)). Dr. Canavero reviewed the high school proficiency exam phase-out schedule, the end-of-course exams phase-in schedule, and the cut score setting process. He reported on the ACT exam administered to all junior high school students to determine college and career readiness and the ACT profile report executive summary ([Exhibit F](#)).

Discussion ensued among Dr. Canavero and LCE members regarding the following:

- Assessments administered, compared to other states;
- The establishment of a cut score baseline for end-of-course exams;
- The State Board of Education’s High School Graduation Committee review of the 12th grade, and student access to Advanced Placement (AP) courses and/or college courses;
- High school graduation requirements in relation to various types of diplomas;
- K–3 literacy as a key focus area;
- The federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), opportunities, and goal setting; and
- End-of-course exams.

Kristine R. Minnich, Assistant Superintendent, Student Services Division, Clark County School District (CCSD), provided an explanation of the Balanced Assessment System ([Exhibit G](#)) to guide instruction and improve student performance.

Tiffany Seibel, Assessment Director III, Assessment Division, CCSD, continued the presentation with an overview of the Balanced Assessment System ([Exhibit G](#)).

Scott Bailey, Chief Academic Officer, Office of Academics, Washoe County School District (WCSD) introduced the WCSD’s assessment program.

Sandra Aird, Ed.D., Director of Assessment, Office of Academics, WCSD, presented information on the program and assessments administered to students ([Exhibit H](#)).

There was discussion between the presenters and Assemblyman Stewart regarding the areas tested in career and technical education, as well as exam results from Zoom, Victory, and Empowerment schools.

AGENDA ITEM VI—PRESENTATION ON DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAMS IN UTAH

(This agenda item was taken out of order.)

Gregg Roberts, Specialist, World Languages, Dual Language Immersion, Teaching and Learning, Utah State Office of Education, delivered information on Utah's Dual Language Immersion (DLI) model ([Exhibit I](#)) which included a short video on the model (The video may be viewed at: <https://youtu.be/hTG0YFU8vWA>.) and the DLI report ([Exhibit I-1](#)). He stated the DLI program begins in kindergarten or first grade, and instruction is divided between two classrooms with instruction provided in one classroom only in the target language and the other classroom only in English. Mr. Roberts provided the following detailed information:

- Languages taught include Chinese, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish;
- In 2015, the program is taught in 138 schools with approximately 29,000 students;
- The program is open to all students with no qualification process and no prerequisites;
- The program has assisted in closing achievement gaps;
- It is extremely cost effective with a yearly cost of approximately \$100 per student above traditional instruction;
- It is a proficiency-driven program in terms of listening, reading, speaking, and writing;
- The DLI secondary school pathway includes the ability to earn college credit; students who pass the AP language and culture exam will be eligible to enroll in upper division university language courses in a high school setting;
- There is close monitoring of the DLI program with statewide infrastructure support; and
- The program utilizes established performance measures.

There was discussion among Mr. Roberts and LCE members on the following issues:

- The funding and cost effectiveness of the program;
- Teacher licensure solutions for guest teachers from other countries;
- Visiting ambassadors impressed with the program; and
- The practice of a second language outside the classroom.

AGENDA ITEM VII—DISCUSSION CONCERNING AVAILABILITY OF COMPUTER SCIENCE COURSES IN NEVADA’S K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND TRENDS TO ENCOURAGE PUPILS TO LEARN CODING AND ENGAGE IN THE FIELD OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

Hadi Partovi, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Code.org, presented information describing how technology affects every aspect of our daily lives ([Exhibit J](#)). He stressed the need for every student to have a computer science foundation. Mr. Partovi also offered the following:

- There are fewer computer science students than ten years ago and half as many women;
- Every industry is desperately trying to hire computer programmers;
- The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, predicts there will be over one million computing job openings by 2022, in every industry and every state;
- A computer science major can earn 40 percent more than the average college graduate;
- 71 percent of all new jobs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) are in computer science with only 8 percent of STEM graduates in computer science;
- 9 of 10 parents want their child to study computer science and only 1 in 4 schools teach computer science;
- We need to encourage minorities and females to be interested and engaged in computer science in the elementary and middle school years;
- Computer science is the fastest growing AP course; and
- As a result of the Code.org program, in the past two and one-half years, over 100 school districts have embraced computer science; 25,000 teachers have been trained to teach computer science; over 10 percent of all K-8 students have begun coding (43 percent are female); 18 states have changed graduation policies; and seven countries have changed curriculum.

Senator Woodhouse stated she is part of a group working on proposals to develop computer science courses in the schools.

Steve Canavero, Ph.D., previously identified, acknowledged the importance of computer science. He stated NDE is actively addressing the need to get computer science into the schools.

Mark Newburn, Vice President, State Board of Education, and Chair, Department of Computer Science Advisory Board, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, stated Nevada has been involved in a nationwide discussion to get computer science into the schools. He testified to the importance of computer science for all students. Mr. Newburn reviewed options to

incorporate computer science courses at the middle and high school levels. He reiterated the diversity issues and that STEM loses girls and students of color in middle school.

Discussion ensued between Assemblyman Stewart and Mr. Newburn regarding computer science curriculum and incorporating that curriculum into other courses.

Robert Sidford, 21st Century Learning Coordinator, WCSD, reported on initiatives to incorporate computer science into the schools to include:

- Initiatives with Code.org;
- Afterschool opportunities;
- Considering a computer literacy graduation requirement; and
- Providing computer science pathways starting in grade 5.

Jesse Welsh, Ed.D., Academic Manager, Innovative Learning Environments Division, Educational and Operational Excellence Unit, CCSD, provided information regarding coding and computer science initiatives ([Exhibit K](#)).

Monique Gaudin, Project Facilitator, Career and Technical Education, CCSD, indicated there are several different pathways to incorporate computer science into the curriculum.

There was discussion among presenters and LCE members regarding the following:

- Computer science professional development;
- The need for qualified teachers in the computer science field;
- The number of schools with computer science courses; and
- The number and type of AP computer science courses offered.

AGENDA ITEM VIII—DISCUSSION OF GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAMS IN NEVADA’S K-12 PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Steve Canavero, Ph.D., previously identified, stated NDE is working to understand how the Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) programs are implemented in the districts and the success of those programs.

Tyler Hall, Interim Assistant Superintendent, Student Services Division, CCSD, and Stacy Moll, Coordinator, Gifted Education Program, CCSD, provided information on the GATE services and funding ([Exhibit L](#)).

Upon questioning by Senator Hammond, Ms. Moll responded that GATE funding is allocated throughout the year to provide in-depth professional development, parent seminars, and workshops.

Discussion ensued between presenters and LCE members regarding:

- Long-term goals and improvements for the expansion of GATE programs;
- Current funding;
- Increasing the number of students in the GATE program; and
- Tracking the progress of GATE students.

Scott Bailey, previously identified, provided the GATE program introduction and funding information for WCSD.

Cheri DiMartino, Director, Gifted and Talented Education Programs, WCSD, provided a report and recommendations for the GATE program ([Exhibit M](#)).

AGENDA ITEM IX—DISCUSSION OF THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY TO CREATE INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUPILS IN K–12 PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dale Frost, State Policy Director, International Association for K–12 Online Learning (iNACOL), stated iNACOL’s mission is to catalyze the transformation of K–12 education policy and practice to advance powerful, personalized, learner-centered experiences through competency-based, blended, and online learning ([Exhibit N](#)). He submitted the following documents:

- “Course Access: Providing Equitable Access to High-Quality Learning Opportunities” ([Exhibit N-1](#));
- “Course Access: Equitable Opportunities for College and Career Ready Students” ([Exhibit N-2](#)); and
- *iNACOL State Policy Frameworks 2015: 5 Critical Issues to Transform K–12 Education* ([Exhibit N-3](#)).

Mr. Frost provided information on the advantages of Course Access in providing public school students with expanded course offerings across learning environments from diverse, accountable providers. He added that Course Access provides equitable access for students, a focus on quality and stakeholder engagement, and sustainable funding.

Mr. Frost explained that blended learning is a formal education program in which a student learns, at least in part through online learning, with some element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace and at least in part at a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home. He described that personalized learning is tailored for each student’s strengths,

needs, and interests, including enabling student voice and choice in what, how, when, and where they learn, to provide flexibility and supports to ensure mastery of the highest standards possible.

Mr. Frost outlined five critical issues to transform K–12 education:

- Create competency-based education systems;
- Improve student access and equity;
- Ensure quality with standards and performance metrics;
- Modernize educator and leader development; and
- Build new learning models infrastructure.

In conclusion, Mr. Frost recommended the following:

- Create a competency-based education task force during the next legislation session;
- Provide flexibility in required hours of seat time for earning credits;
- Establish innovation zones;
- Set up pilot programs; and
- Create policies that allow for multiple pathways to earning credits for graduation.

There was discussion between Chair Woodbury and Mr. Frost with regard to online classes.

Steve Canavero, Ph.D., previously identified, stated NDE has expressed an interest in expanding course access and distance education to ensure students have access to courses not being taught in the schools, especially in the rural districts. He stated AP and college and career readiness grants are being used to expand opportunities for students and remove barriers for school district access.

Robert Sidford, previously identified, presented information on WCSD’s personalized, blended, and hybrid learning ([Exhibit O](#)).

Sandra Aird, previously identified, continued the presentation on competency-based programs.

Katherine Hadley, Principal, North Star Online School, WCSD, reported on WCSD’s only K–12 online school and the benefits of an online school. She asserted online schools offer unique educational experiences for students.

Jesse Welsh, Ed.D., previously identified, and Kim Loomis, Coordinator, Innovative Projects, Innovative Learning Environments Division, Educational and Operational Excellence Unit, CCSD, presented online and blended learning programs in CCSD ([Exhibit P](#)).

Discussion ensued between Dr. Welsh and LCE members regarding the online and blended learning program initiated at the school level and outreach to schools without this program.

AGENDA ITEM X—PUBLIC COMMENT

Sandra Sheldon, Ed.D., Superintendent, Churchill County School District, reported on the district's online learning environment and blended learning initiatives. She stated blended learning incorporates online and problem solving, and can transform every classroom, teacher, and student.

Terri Rupp, previously identified, stated her child, a blind kindergartner, only receives one hour of braille instruction once a week. She testified blind students are not receiving the instruction they need to be able to read and succeed. Ms. Rupp stressed the need to introduce blind students to braille earlier in life to succeed. She urged the LCE to support the federal braille literacy bill.

AGENDA ITEM XI—ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina Harper
Senior Research Secretary

Todd M. Butterworth
Senior Research Analyst

Kristin Rossiter
Senior Research Analyst

APPROVED BY:

Assemblywoman Melissa Woodbury, Chair

Date: _____

EXHIBITS

EXHIBIT	WITNESS/ENTITY	DESCRIPTION
Exhibit A	Todd M. Butterworth and Kristin Rossiter, Senior Research Analysts, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB)	Agenda
Exhibit B	Terri Rupp, National Federation of the Blind of Nevada	Written comments
Exhibit B-1	Terri Rupp, National Federation of the Blind of Nevada	Publication - <i>Future Reflections</i> , Volume 27, Number 2, National Federation of the Blind, 2008
Exhibit C	Steven Werlein, Ed.D., Principal, Nevada Connections Academy	Written comments
Exhibit D	Jeff Hardcastle, AICP, Nevada State Demographer, Office of the State Demographer, Department of Taxation	Microsoft PowerPoint presentation
Exhibit E	Steve Canavero, Ph.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction, Nevada's Department of Education (NDE)	Preliminary statewide summative results
Exhibit F	Steve Canavero, Ph.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction, NDE	ACT profile report and executive summary
Exhibit G	Kristine R. Minnich, Assistant Superintendent, Student Services Division, Clark County School District (CCSD), and Tiffany Seibel, Assessment Director III, Assessment Division, CCSD	Microsoft PowerPoint presentation
Exhibit H	Scott Bailey, Chief Academic Officer, Office of Academics, Washoe county School District (WCSD) and Sandra Aird, Ed.D., Director of Assessment, Office of Academics, WCSD	Microsoft PowerPoint presentation
Exhibit I	Gregg Roberts, Specialist, World Languages, Dual Language Immersion, (DLI) Teaching and Learning, Utah State Office of Education	Microsoft PowerPoint presentation
Exhibit I-1	Gregg Roberts, Specialist, World Languages, DL, Teaching and Learning, Utah State Office of Education	DLI Report
Exhibit J	Hadi Partovi, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Code.org	Microsoft PowerPoint presentation

Exhibit K	Jesse Welsh, Ed.D., Academic Manager, Innovative Learning Environments Division, Educational and Operational Excellence Unit, CCSD	Microsoft PowerPoint presentation
Exhibit L	Tyler Hall, Interim Assistant Superintendent, Student Services Division, CCSD, and Stacy Moll, Coordinator, Gifted Education, Program, CCSD	Microsoft PowerPoint presentation
Exhibit M	Scott Bailey, Chief Academic Officer, Office of Academics, WCSD, and Cheri DiMartino, Director, Gifted and Talented Education Programs, WCSD	Microsoft PowerPoint presentation
Exhibit N	Dale Frost, State Policy Director, International Association for K-12 Online Learning (iNACOL)	Microsoft PowerPoint presentation
Exhibit N-1	Dale Frost, State Policy Director, iNACOL	Report
Exhibit N-2	Dale Frost, State Policy Director, iNACOL	Report
Exhibit N-3	Dale Frost, State Policy Director, iNACOL	Report
Exhibit O	Robert Sidford, 21st Century Learning Coordinator; Sandra Aird, Director of Assessment, Office of Academics; and Katherine Hadley, Principal, North Star Online School, WCSD	Microsoft PowerPoint presentation
Exhibit P	Jesse Welsh, Ed.D., Academic Manager, Innovative Learning Environments Division, Educational and Operational Excellence Unit, CCSD, and Kim Loomis, Coordinator, Innovative Projects, Innovative Learning Environments Division, Educational and Operational Excellence Unit, CCSD	Microsoft PowerPoint presentation

This set of “Summary Minutes and Action Report” is supplied as an informational service. Exhibits in electronic format may not be complete. Copies of the complete exhibits and other materials distributed at the meeting are on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau, Carson City, Nevada. You may contact the Library online at www.leg.state.nv.us/lcb/research/library/feedbackmail.cfm or telephone: (775) 684-6827.