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# State of Nevada Assembly

*Eighty-Second Session*

October 23, 2024

Patricia Charlton  
Chancellor  
Nevada System of Higher Education  
4300 South Maryland Parkway  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89119-7530

Amy J. Carvalho  
Chair  
Board of Regents  
Nevada System of Higher Education  
4300 South Maryland Parkway  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89119-7530

Dear Chancellor Charlton and Chair Carvalho:

The [Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education](#) (COE) spent a significant amount of time during the 2023–2024 Interim considering a variety of education topics, including those related to higher education. Two topics that particularly concerned the COE were: (1) the lack of specialized instructional support personnel (SISP), such as school psychologists, in Nevada; and (2) dual and concurrent enrollment programs in the State. This letter serves to transmit the COE's recommendations on these topics to the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) Chancellor and the Board of Regents Chair.

First, specifically concerning SISP, the 2022 ratios for school psychologists, school social workers, and school counselors to students, respectively, were presented as 1:1,866, 1:8,730, and 1:544 (recommended ratios for these professionals are 1:500, 1:250, and 1:250, respectively). The COE also heard, at the time of the meeting, there was only one active school psychology program in the State at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. A second program at Nevada State University accepted its first cohort this fall. When discussing the barriers to increasing the number of SISP, particularly school psychologists, one presenter highlighted the limited number of higher education programs in the State and its impact on the SISP career pipeline.

Resultingly, the COE voted unanimously to encourage efforts that might increase the number of SISP in this State. Specific to higher education, the COE voted to encourage funding to increase the number of school psychologist education programs offered by NSHE institutions, as well as to increase the size of existing programs. Furthermore, the COE encouraged allocation of additional funding for SISP-related scholarships.

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Recognizing that efforts to increase the number of SISP in Nevada will also require work and input from other parties related to funding and retention efforts, the COE will also be reaching out to the Governor and the Senate Committee on Finance and Assembly Committee on Ways and Means. However, the COE recognizes that NSHE is a critical aspect of this conversation, which is why the members sought to include the Chancellor and the Chair of the Board of Regents in this recommendation.

Next, concerning dual and concurrent enrollment, a recurring conversation among COE members focused on whether collegiate-level professors are teaching dual enrollment courses. Presenters on this topic noted that it varies, and some courses are taught by college professors, while some are taught by high school instructors. This lack of uniformity is a source of concern for some of the committee members, including myself, as it is important we maintain consistency in course instruction for our programs across the State. Furthermore, NSHE provided information indicating that each institution sets its accreditation requirements for determining the necessary credentials for high school teachers to be teaching a college-level course. It seems necessary that NSHE, as a system, should be playing more of a role in this work to maintain consistency. Several of the NSHE institutions' presidents and representatives also explained the current status of and opportunities to strengthen dual and concurrent enrollment programs, including consideration of ways to systematize and more deliberately structure dual and concurrent enrollment across Nevada.

For this reason, the COE voted unanimously to encourage the Board of Regents to form a committee to study an overall strategy, goal, and trajectory of dual and concurrent enrollment programs in Nevada, including geographic service areas, mission differentiation, consideration of qualifications and stipends provided to those teaching such courses, consistency in counseling/advising, and a review of equity in experience with respect to available and relevant data.

Thank you for considering the COE's recommendations and your continued passion and efforts to support Nevada's education system. Should you or your staff have any questions, please contact the COE's policy analysts, Alex Drozdoff and Jen Sturm-Gahner, via phone at (775) 684-6825 or via email at [Alex.Drozdoff@lcb.state.nv.us](mailto:Alex.Drozdoff@lcb.state.nv.us) or [Jen.Sturm@lcb.state.nv.us](mailto:Jen.Sturm@lcb.state.nv.us).

Sincerely,

Assemblywoman Bilbray-Axelrod, Chair  
Joint Interim Standing Committee on  
Education

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cc: Alejandro Rodriguez, Director of Government Relations, NSHE  
Asher Killian, Legislative Counsel, Legal Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB)  
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