



**NEVADA LEGISLATURE**  
**LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**  
*(Nevada Revised Statutes [NRS] 218E.605)*

**SUMMARY MINUTES AND ACTION REPORT**

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The fourth meeting of the Nevada Legislature's Committee on Education was held on Tuesday, April 22, 2014, at 9 a.m. in Room 4401 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 2135 of the 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, are available on the Nevada Legislature's website at <http://www.leg.state.nv.us/interim/77th2013/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](mailto:publications@lcb.state.nv.us); telephone: 775/684-6835).

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT IN LAS VEGAS:**

Senator Joyce Woodhouse, Chair  
Assemblyman Elliot T. Anderson, Vice Chair  
Senator Moises (Mo) Denis  
Senator Aaron D. Ford  
Senator Scott T. Hammond  
Assemblywoman Marilyn Dondero Loop  
Assemblyman Harvey J. Munford  
Assemblyman Lynn D. Stewart

**OTHER LEGISLATOR PRESENT:**

Assemblyman Randy Kirner

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT:**

Todd M. Butterworth, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division  
Diane C. Thornton, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division  
Risa B. Lang, Chief Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division  
Karly O'Krent, Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division  
Andrea McCalla, Program Fiscal Analyst, Fiscal Division  
Tarron L. Collins, Senior Research Secretary, Research Division

## **OPENING REMARKS**

- Chair Woodhouse welcomed the Committee Members, presenters, and public and provided general housekeeping information.

## **PRESENTATION ON SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING STRATEGIES IN THE WASHOE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT**

- Trish Shaffer, Coordinator, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support Division, Washoe County School District (WCSD), provided a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “Social and Emotional Learning in the Washoe County School District!” that included: (1) definitions; (2) skills and strategies; (3) future employment skills; (4) studies and statistics; and (5) implementation. (Please see [Exhibit B.](#))
- Megan Waugh, Principal, Lloyd Diedrichsen Elementary School, WCSD, continued the presentation and provided examples and a video of how Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is implemented at her elementary school.
- Assemblyman Stewart inquired when SEL instruction is given to students.
- Ms. Waugh noted they instruct students of all grade levels in all facets of SEL, starting as young as kindergarten.

In response to Vice Chair Anderson’s inquiry regarding the definition of SEL and which school personnel are providing SEL instruction, Ms. Shaffer replied that the WCSD is trying to teach students how to get along with each other and instill skills to be successful in life. She stated that classroom teachers are responsible for SEL implementation, and some students get additional reinforcement from school counselors.

Discussion ensued among Senator Hammond, Ms. Shaffer, and Ms. Waugh regarding the time and flexibility teaching SEL skills and curricula. Ms. Shaffer commented SEL is embedded throughout the day with approximately 20 to 45 minutes each week spent on instruction. Ms. Waugh added many students possess SEL skills, but implementation of SEL is required in all classrooms.

- Vice Chair Anderson commented on SEL related to students with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and inquired whether SEL should be specific to students with ASD.
- Ms. Shaffer responded that all students need SEL skills to be successful.

Responding to Assemblyman Munford’s inquiry regarding the student racial demographics at Lloyd Diedrichsen Elementary School, Ms. Waugh stated that 42 percent of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch, 53-60 percent are Caucasian, and did not know the remaining student make-up. Assemblyman Munford inquired further whether there are any programs in the upper grades, to which Ms. Shaffer responded that SEL has been

implemented in middle schools, noting an emphasis on freshman students transitioning to high school. Assemblyman Munford stated that social justice is important, and Ms. Shaffer commented on the implementation of SEL related to student rejection and how the skills learned through SEL help students cope with rejection.

In response to Senator Denis' comment on the long-term goals of a program like SEL and whether the schools have seen a reduction in negative behaviors, Ms. Shaffer replied the program has been in effect for approximately 18 months and they are seeing improvement in behaviors for all students where SEL was implemented.

- Senator Denis asked about the response of teachers to the SEL program.
- Ms. Waugh said the teachers' responses at Lloyd Diedrichsen Elementary School have been fantastic and noted the approach has been to make teachers aware of SEL and not add new requirements to their curricula.
- Chair Woodhouse commented on bullying in schools and inquired whether there are specific student populations that could benefit more from the SEL skills.
- Ms. Waugh stated all students can benefit from SEL skills and awareness is evident throughout the schools implementing SEL.

Responding to Assemblyman Munford's inquiry about a tour of Lloyd Diedrichsen Elementary School, Ms. Waugh stated the Assemblyman would be welcome anytime.

- Chair Woodhouse called for public comment on Agenda Item No. II.
- Linda Buckardt, Clark County resident, commented that SEL is not a new concept, just a new way to present it.
- Christina Leventis, Clark County resident, expressed that SEL should be taught at home not in the public schools. (Please see [Exhibit C.](#))
- Amy Bauck, Clark County resident, provided testimony opposed to SEL in schools and commented on the time limit placed on public testimony. (Please see [Exhibit D.](#))
- April Tatro-Medlin, Clark County resident, offered to provide information that shows a link between electromagnetic radiation and violence.
- John Wagner, Independent American Party and Elko County resident, provided testimony regarding video production and educating Nevada's students.

## **UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF END-OF-COURSE EXAMS AND THE COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS ASSESSMENT**

- Steve Canavero, Ph.D., Deputy Superintendent for Student Achievement, Nevada's Department of Education (NDE), provided an overview of the end-of-course examinations and implementation. He commented on the changes that need to take place for the graduating class of 2018.

Discussion ensued between Senator Ford and Dr. Canavero regarding what other states use as end-of-course exams and their scoring method. Dr. Canavero responded that Tennessee and Washington State both use end-of-course exams and noted some states use an average of end-of-course exams and classroom instruction grades. Senator Ford then inquired whether a student can fail a course and pass an end-of-course exam and still receive credit for the class. Dr. Canavero stated he did not know but would look into that scenario.

Further discussion ensued between Senator Hammond and Dr. Canavero regarding end-of-course exams and whether a failing student can return to school and graduate by testing out through an end-of-course exam, and whether science is going to be assessed and which test will be used for that assessment. Dr. Canavero responded that Nevada is looking into past students using the end-of-course exams to meet graduation requirements. He stated the standards for science are being developed and should be in place, as a field test, in approximately two years with an end-of-course exam in place within the next few years. Dr. Canavero mentioned that next year there will be a State developed science assessment in the 5th and 8th grades.

- Dr. Canavero continued his presentation providing information on the college- and career-readiness assessment. He stated the assessment is a participation only exam, and Nevada has a committee in place to create and evaluate the assessment.
- Assemblyman Stewart inquired whether Nevada will rate its education system without a common assessment standard.
- Dr. Canavero replied states will continue to have control over their own standards but without a national common assessment test, assessing education will be difficult.

Responding to Senator Hammond's inquiry regarding the tests given during the junior year, Dr. Canavero replied that is when college admission tests are administered and is a logical time to determine a course of action for students entering their senior year of high school. Senator Hammond clarified that remediation may be needed, which would be evident through test scores. Dr. Canavero presented alternatives to prepare high school seniors for the workforce, through internships and special instruction courses based on test results from the junior year assessment tests.

- Chair Woodhouse called for public comment on Agenda Item No III.

- Deb Nuebecker, Clark County resident, provided testimony regarding Assembly Bill 288 and the lack of textbooks available for Algebra I students. (Please see [Exhibit E.](#))
- April Tatro-Medlin, Clark County resident, provided testimony opposed to students in the Clark County School District (CCSD) being required to take end-of-course exams due to memory loss associated with exposure to Wi-Fi signals.
- Tom Fishbach, Clark County resident, commented that Nevada should not rely on the federal government for input on education.
- Assemblyman Stewart clarified his definition of federalism as the separation of powers between the national and state governments.

## **THE VALUE OF STUDENT DATA IN IMPROVING EDUCATION**

- Eric Creighton, Chief Operations Officer, Infinite Campus, provided a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “The Value of Student Data—Balancing the Value against Risks and Fears of ‘Big Data’” that included an: (1) overview; (2) introduction; (3) value; (4) risks and fears; (5) data information; and (6) balance. (Please see [Exhibit F.](#))

In response to Senator Ford’s inquiries regarding additional steps Nevada can take to protect student data and measures in place for conflicting privacy terms between parents and school districts in Nevada, Mr. Creighton replied there should be a process in place when a vendor receives a request for data, including court orders. He stated that enforcement of contracts is key, and it is the obligation of the districts to ensure the terms are not conflicting. Mr. Creighton stated student data privacy is paramount to the success of Infinite Campus, and violations of the privacy contracts would reflect poorly on his business, resulting in contract terminations.

- Mr. Creighton continued his presentation with more information on data privacy contract provisions. He cautioned there should be contract terms in place to protect the input of student data through Internet use in the classroom.
- Senator Hammond inquired whether other states are using parental consent to allow parents to opt out of data collection that is proposed to be used for additional purposes.
- Mr. Creighton commented he did not know of any states using parental consent for data sharing beyond longitudinal data systems.

Responding to Senator Hammond’s suggestion that Nevada may want to include provisions limiting the sharing of data to outside agencies, Mr. Creighton stated the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) provided further clarification to the laws, thus making them stricter.

- Assemblyman Stewart inquired whether Mr. Creighton believes Nevada is complying with existing regulations or needs to strengthen its regulations regarding data collection.
- Mr. Creighton noted the NDE has developed a definition of terms document, but opined Nevada needs to strengthen the language for data sharing.

In response to Vice Chair Anderson's query as to what information Nevada collects comes from legislative mandates and whether the data is necessary for assessment, Mr. Creighton stated the United States Congress passed a bill that requires certain information, then state legislatures developed regulations to meet the requirements for data and information helpful to the individual state. He said NDE regulates data collected for Nevada and noted data is essential for assessment. Mr. Creighton mentioned that Nevada has never collected data requesting political or religious affiliations.

Responding to Chair Woodhouse's inquiry regarding the student protection bills passed by other states and whether Nevada has ever had a breach of data, Mr. Creighton said the bills passed do not affect Infinite Campus because they were not using student data for anything other than its intended use. He stated there has been no unauthorized access of his company's student data, but there have been three inadvertent disclosures of information.

- Vice Chair Anderson inquired whether it is possible to have a completely secure environment when collecting data.
- Mr. Creighton stated the only sure way to ensure there is never a breach is to not collect data, but clarified without data there can be no assessments.
- Senator Hammond inquired what data breaches have occurred in Nevada.
- Mr. Creighton stated student data was exposed to staff during a training exercise.
- Chair Woodhouse called for public comment on Agenda Item No. IV.
- John Eppolito, Washoe County resident, commented on parental access to student data and the charges NDE wanted him to pay for that information. He opined that WCSD collects Social Security numbers and discussed the reinterpretation of the FERPA laws.
- Bob Clifford, Churchill County resident, provided testimony opposing data collection in Nevada and encouraged a clause for parental consent for student data collection.
- Trudy Sanford, Washoe County resident, commented on the collection of data and opined there is another reason for data collection.
- C. T. Wang, Clark County resident, agreed with previous testimony provided opposing the collection of data in Nevada. He encouraged the Legislative Committee on Education (LCE) to find out what data is being collected in Nevada.

- Amy Bauck, Clark County resident, provided testimony opposed to data collection related to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).
- Tom Fishbach, Clark County resident, encouraged the LCE to put data collection within the school district's jurisdiction and require parental consent for participation.

## **UPDATE ON THE SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT CONSORTIUM FIELD TESTS**

- Joe Willhoft, Ph.D., Executive Director, Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC), provided a Microsoft PowerPoint titled "Smarter Balanced Assessments: An Overview," that included information on assessments for Nevada and the other 23 member states and territories. (Please see [Exhibit G](#).)

In response to Vice Chair Anderson's inquiry regarding the control Nevada has with SBAC and whether SBAC shares information with the federal government, Dr. Willhoft replied that each state has an equal vote in how data is shared or not shared. He noted that SBAC will not share data with the federal government, but it will be NDE's responsibility to share the required data with the federal government.

Discussion ensued between Senator Hammond and Dr. Willhoft regarding: (1) the cost per student for SBAC services; (2) the infrastructure required for testing through SBAC; (3) the timeframe to assess students and whether it is too soon to test students with Nevada's current infrastructure constraints; (4) the field testing and how it is administered on paper; and (5) the accuracy of the assessment when different questions are given to different children. Dr. Willhoft replied the estimated full cost per student is approximately \$27.30 and if the State decides to use only a portion of the assessment, the cost would be approximately \$22.30. He redirected the infrastructure question to the State of Nevada since he does not know Nevada's infrastructure. Dr. Willhoft stated that the testing window is 60 days and can be narrowed to four weeks when testing by grade levels. He added that each student taking the test on a computer has similar results; students tend to think the test is hard due to its natural progression to harder questions. Dr. Willhoft commented that the details still need to be worked out as to which grade levels will use paper testing versus computer testing, and concluded the assessments accurately depict results but ask questions in different orders and ways to determine what the students know.

- Vice Chair Anderson inquired regarding the use of computer adaptive testing by SBAC.
- Dr. Willhoft responded the amount of content in the CCSS is vast and can be assessed with fewer questions through adaptive testing. He stated the precision of information and assessment can best be determined through adaptive computer testing rather than multiple choice.

- Vice Chair Anderson inquired whether technology is an issue for some children not proficient with technology.
- Dr. Willhoft stated SBAC is currently in the middle of field testing to determine those issues, but students have expressed it is not a concern.

Responding to Assemblyman Stewart's inquiry whether each state can set its own passing score and whether there will be teachers from outside the State for assessment administration, Dr. Willhoft replied that each state determines its cut score and the SBAC will present a set of common assessment scores for states to use as benchmarks. Assemblyman Stewart further inquired regarding test difficulty and whether the evaluators will be from Nevada. Dr. Willhoft replied the tests are based on a grade level scale, but the test questions will reflect whether the student is high or low achieving. He concluded it is up to Nevada to determine who scores the SBAC test.

- Steve Canavero, Ph.D., Deputy Superintendent for Student Achievement, NDE, informed the LCE that students in the 3rd through 8th, 9th, and 11th grades are currently being field tested in a single subject. He stated at least one school in each district and four charter schools are being field tested in a specific grade level, at a specific school, and on a specific subject. Dr. Canavero stated approximately 43,500 students are participating; he noted that 4,130 tests have been completed.

In response to Senator Hammond's inquiry regarding the concern of bias in test assessment and whether the test can be graded accurately when more than one person grades the tests, Dr. Willhoft stated to make the tests as fair as possible there is content review and a bias and sensitivity review. He said tests are then re-evaluated and post results, by placing data from the test takers into ethnic groups to evaluate for biases. Dr. Willhoft presented information required for grading and supplied examples to explain the test evaluation process ensuring unbiased results. Senator Hammond shared concerns over the passing along of information from evaluating teachers to their own students and whether the \$27 per student cost for SBAC is accurate. Dr. Willhoft assured him that SBAC is less expensive than most other tests, noting it is more expensive than a multiple-choice test but is competitive in its pricing.

- Assemblyman Stewart inquired how a passing grade will be determined, and who will evaluate the tests in Nevada.
- Dr. Canavero stated the Nevada State Board of Education will make the decision on the scoring levels, and teachers will likely be the evaluators but that decision has not yet been made.

Discussion ensued between Vice Chair Anderson and Dr. Willhoft regarding flexibility of standardized tests to change and alter questions, the cost of the operations of SBAC and the benefits of members in the consortium. The discussion continued with how the assessment measures career-readiness versus college-readiness. Dr. Willhoft confirmed the methods



used to test students and explained the tests will evolve and the costs will be shared among all member states.

- Chair Woodhouse called for public comment on Agenda Item No. V.
- Christina Leventis, Clark County resident, pointed out that although Dr. Willhoft stated that the SBAC will not share student data, it is in the cooperative agreement between the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) and SBAC they will provide timely and complete access to any and all data collected at the state level to the DOE or its designated program monitor, technical assistance providers, or research partners and to the General Accountability Office.
- Jhone Ebert, Chief Innovation Officer, CCSD, commented on two points from the presentation: (1) scheduling issues related to the lack of computers in some schools; and (2) students needing access and practice using the required tools for testing. She stated in creating a 21st century workforce, students need to have access to technological tools.

Responding to Senator Ford's inquiry about solutions to the concerns raised by Ms. Ebert, she stated the CCSD has been working to provide technological access for all students; infrastructure for the Internet, except for in rural schools, is top notch but the number of devices is of concern and indicated the District is trying to purchase devices via grants and Title I funding so that all students can have day to day access. Ms. Ebert noted the CCSD has created a bring your own device policy so that students can use their own tools. She added the environment created for students is very important, and the CCSD works with business partners to ensure access to technology for all students.

Responding to Chair Woodhouse, Dr. Willhoft replied that the DOE has not asked for any individually identifiable student information, and the DOE does not have the authority to have any individually identifiable information. The SBAC does not have the authority to re-disclose any student information to a third party.

- Amy Bauck, Clark County resident, stated the federal government will have access to more than three data points, making it possible to identify a student. She questioned what the test fee covers and expressed concern that Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is hiring people from Craigslist to grade the tests.
- John Eppolito, President, Stop Common Core in Nevada, testified that the SBAC and the DOE contract states, "The SBAC is required to provide timely and complete access to any and all student data collected at the state level to the federal government." He stated the issue in Nevada is students cannot opt out of the CCSS testing requirements and requested students be allowed to opt out of the CCSS testing.
- Bob Clifford, Churchill County resident, provided testimony opposing the CCSS.

- Janice Baldwin, Carson City resident, presented testimony concerning the assessment process of CCSS and encouraged the LCE to re-evaluate the process.
- Neva Harrold, Clark County resident, expressed opposition to the CCSS.
- Linda Backhardt, Clark County resident, testified that testing companies are under the umbrella of large financial companies.
- Fred Voltz, Carson City resident, stated society needs a baseline of knowledge for workers, and all students need to be able to demonstrate subject matter mastery for success in the workplace.

## **DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATIONS RELATED TO THE NEVADA ACADEMIC CONTENT STANDARDS (ALSO REFERRED TO AS THE COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS)**

- Chair Woodhouse advised this item is for an open discussion and noted the Nevada Academic Content Standards (NACS) were adopted four years ago and are contained in the *Nevada Administrative Code* (NAC). She encouraged all to keep an open mind to see where the evidence leads before coming to a conclusion regarding the NACS.

### ***The Truth About Common Core***

- John Eppolito, President, Americans for Better Schools, provided a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation regarding opposition to the CCSS. (Please see [Exhibit H.](#)) He highlighted the following: (1) the CCSS; (2) how the standards were written; (3) validation of the standards; and (4) collection of personal student data. Mr. Eppolito requested the LCE encourage Governor Brian Sandoval to delay SBAC testing to study the implications of the CCSS.

There was discussion between Vice Chair Anderson and Mr. Eppolito regarding the following:

1. Dr. James Milgram's statement that the CCSS standards are 85-90 percent better than existing State standards, and Mr. Eppolito's opposition to the entire CCSS;
2. The amount of information regarding the Bill of Rights contained within the CCSS; and
3. The adoption of the English language arts and math standards by Nevada's State Board of Education and State Board for Career and Technical Education (SBE) in 2010 in a properly noticed public hearing, and clarified the CCSS are national standards not federal standards.

Discussion ensued between Senator Ford and Mr. Eppolito regarding presentations by experts with conflicting opinions. Senator Ford emphasized the SBE has been considering

the CCSS over the last four years with properly, publicly noticed workshops and public hearings with no opposition.

- Assemblywoman Dondero Loop stated the motivation behind the standards is to give guidelines to all public schools, provide benchmarks for students at the end of each grade level, and to ensure all students have the same opportunities to be educated.
- Mr. Eppolito responded he is not against standards, but is opposed to implementing a system that has not been proven or tested.
- Assemblywoman Dondero Loop clarified that Nevada is part of SBAC not PARCC.
- Vice Chair Anderson noted, Mr. Eppolito is concerned the CCSS are going to fail. He inquired whether Mr. Eppolito thinks Nevada's previous standards were working.
- Mr. Eppolito commented that his children are getting a great education in Incline Village, Nevada, and does not want to experiment with new standards when the old standards are working.
- Vice Chair Anderson stated there are bright spots in education throughout the State but the improved standards are for the majority of Nevada's schools that are not doing well.
- Mr. Eppolito replied the CCSS hurt the average and below average students, especially in math.
- Chair Woodhouse inquired as to the reason cited for the lack of impact the Brookings Institute Study found on student learning related to the CCSS.
- Mr. Eppolito responded the federal government's involvement in education is not helping; it is making education worse.
- Chair Woodhouse commented that standards are the base for education and many variables work together to create successes or failures in the system.
- Senator Denis commented on the Brookings Institute's outlook on the CCSS and asked Mr. Eppolito to comment on the CCSS being touted as more rigorous than anything Nevada has had for standards.
- Mr. Eppolito responding by identifying a number of states that have high academic standards proven to be successful.

- Vice Chair Anderson commented on the suggestion Nevada use an educational system like Massachusetts' and noted its tax rate and ability to pay for curriculum development. He added Nevada cannot afford that type of education system.
- Mr. Eppolito informed the LCE that Dr. Sandra Stotsky and Dr. Milgrim have academic standards available for free.
- Assemblyman Munford commented on his Assembly District, its ethnic diversity, and the designated Prime6 Schools related to the CCSS. He suggested he might hold a town hall meeting to inform his constituents.
- Senator Ford inquired regarding the \$10,000 fee estimated by NDE to gather and report student data information for Mr. Eppolito's children and whether the SBE has looked at Massachusetts' state standards.
- Mr. Eppolito replied he does not want his children taking the SBAC test or their data collected and encouraged the LCE to develop an opt-out program. He concluded he was unaware what the SBE has done regarding looking at other states' curricula.

### ***Why Common Core Should be Stopped***

- Jane Robbins, Senior Fellow, American Principles Project, submitted testimony regarding "The Problems with the Common Core National Standards" and "Student-Privacy Aspects of the Common Core Standards Scheme." (Please see [Exhibit I](#) and [Exhibit I-1](#).)

Discussion ensued between Senator Ford and Ms. Robbins regarding: (1) local control; (2) Algebra II standards; (3) indoctrination; (4) which happened first, bad schools or federal government involvement; and (5) data collection through SBAC. Ms. Robbins responded SBAC has not determined what information will be collected and they may decide not to include any identifiable information, but noted any data requested, including identifiable data based on the signed contract, must be provided. Ms. Robbins opined the plateauing and decline of public education occurred in the 1960s as a result of the federal government becoming involved. Senator Ford commented that because someone takes money for research or work does not equate to a bad or biased product. He further inquired whether the assessments of the past compare to the assessments for the CCSS and how the 10-year time frame compares. Ms. Robbins replied it would be better to propose and assess standards at local or state levels, then move it to the national level when success has been proven.

Responding to Vice Chair Anderson's inquiry related to the *U.S. Constitution* and funding for K-12 education, Ms. Robbins said she did not believe the founding fathers intended for the federal government to tie funds for education to teacher assessment. She responded to Vice Chair Anderson's inquiry regarding Appendix B of the CCSS

requiring certain political and social beliefs be taught through specific curriculum, stating the CCSS do not have required material, but opined that some of the recommended reading materials are inappropriate. Discussion ensued regarding what in Appendix B met Ms. Robbins' standards for appropriate material with examples. Vice Chair Anderson clarified, the CCSS do not require certain materials be used or lessons taught in certain ways, and Ms. Robbins acknowledged he was correct. Following Vice Chair Anderson's comments that today is not like the 1950s and schools are not segregated nor fit a one-size-fits-all model, Ms. Robbins noted it was the local control and parental impact of curricula that made schools better in the 1950s.

In response to Senator Hammond's inquiry regarding local control issues related to the books in Appendix B and parental options when they do not want their children reading certain books, Ms. Robbins replied there is nothing in the CCSS that would prevent a teacher from choosing a different book. Ms. Robbins replied to Senator Hammond's inquiry stating the CCSS were not internationally benchmarked. She commented that Dr. Stotsky did her own study comparing the CCSS to other nations and found limited similarities. Responding to Senator Hammond's inquiry related to the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), Ms. Robbins provided information on the Massachusetts standards and mentioned it adopted the CCSS because of funding the federal government was offering through the Race to the Top grant program. Finally, responding to Senator Hammond's request for a definition of "rigorous" related to the CCSS; Ms. Robbins stated rigorous means "does not have a defined answer."

- Assemblyman Stewart inquired whether the CCSS could be salvaged with a few changes like: control issues, data protection for students, and a few other items.
- Ms. Robbins replied the entire framework is flawed and the whole curriculum should be scrapped.

Responding to Senator Denis' comments that the CCSS are the floor, not the ceiling and how the standards relate to former standards, Ms. Robbins stated some of the standards at the lower level need to stay in line with the proposed grade level standards for testing purposes. She added the CCSS and former standards cannot be measured as a whole; it depends on each state. Senator Denis then inquired whether Nevada could develop their own assessment and Ms. Robbins replied there is no requirement in the CCSS that a state must use a particular testing service.

- Senator Hammond advised that a state can add to the CCSS, but when testing to the standards and when the tests are tied to teacher evaluations, the added standards become an issue for teachers.
- Ms. Robbins commented that "No Child Left Behind" started the push tying teacher salaries to test scores but opined that the CCSS takes it even further.

- Senator Ford discussed standards, assessments, and the relationship between the CCSS and assessments tied to teacher salaries.
- Vice Chair Anderson noted, some of the standards and assessments tied to teacher performance are in the CCSS. He encouraged the LCE to look at the progress Nevada has made for teacher assessment and the improvements in curricula.

### *The Conservative Case for Common Core*

- Michael Brickman, National Policy Director, Thomas B. Fordham Institute (Institute), provided testimony regarding the higher standards proposed in the CCSS and encouraged the LCE to retain the adopted standards. He submitted documents grading Nevada's previous standards compared to the newly adopted CCSS. (Please see [Exhibit J](#).) Mr. Brickman presented information regarding three major concerns related to the CCSS: (1) the standards are products of the federal government; (2) the standards have been created to indoctrinate rather than educate; and (3) the data collection of student information. He provided background information and details related to the CCSS.

Discussion ensued between Senator Ford and Mr. Brickman regarding indoctrination in schools and an inappropriate book from Appendix B of the CCSS. Mr. Brickman stated the CCSS do not include science or history standards and suggested there is no indoctrination through the CCSS. He noted the standards are rigorous, not mandatory, and provided examples of material that can be used. Mr. Brickman encouraged superintendents, teachers, parents, and students to oppose the materials they feel are inappropriate and recommend against using them in the classroom.

Discussion ensued between Senator Hammond and Mr. Brickman regarding states' curricula and the best curricula around the nation. Mr. Brickman opined the standards are so new there is not one proven system. He stated the ultimate goal is to improve student college- and career-readiness, and noted the CCSS were developed in a collaborative effort by 48 states. The fact the states are working together on standards implementation and assessment development enables cost savings and shared best practices. Senator Hammond asked for statistical data on the CCSS adoption by the governors, for which Mr. Brickman replied he would provide the available data.

- Assemblyman Munford noted that censorship occurs every day in the classroom regarding political and religious discussions. He stated students should be made aware of all current events, without censorship, as long as the information is factual.
- Mr. Brickman stated the CCSS are standards for English language arts and math only. He also reminded the LCE the curricula is chosen at the local level.
- Vice Chair Anderson inquired about the connection, Bill Gates has with the CCSS.

- Mr. Brickman stated that Fordham has been fighting for higher standards for years and its position has nothing to do with the grant supplied by Bill Gates to Fordham.
- Senator Hammond inquired regarding Nevada funding needed for teacher training related to the CCSS, the amount projected to be spent, and at what point a state changes course when it realizes the CCSS are not beneficial.
- Mr. Brickman commented he did not know the dollar amount needed for additional teacher training, but the CCSS, known in Nevada as the NACS, are higher standards than were previously in place. He stated all teachers need continued training, especially for problems created by the implementation of higher standards.

### ***Statewide Implementation History and Future Considerations***

- Dale A.R. Erquiaga, Superintendent of Public Instruction, NDE, provided a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “Legislative Committee on Education,” regarding the: (1) history of Common Core in Nevada; (2) Nevada Blue Ribbon Task Force; (3) adoption process; (4) legislative action; (5) local control; (6) Nevada System of Higher Education; (7) executive oversight; (8) looking ahead; and (9) Nevada ready. (Please see [Exhibit K.](#))

Responding to Assemblyman Munford’s inquiry whether the pressure of performance and achievement was the cause for the cheating incident in his Assembly District, Mr. Erquiaga replied the incident was rare, and NDE will increase security to prevent additional incidents from occurring in the future.

### ***Standards Implementation in the Washoe County School District***

- Scott Bailey, Chief Academic Officer, WCSD, provided information on the implementation of the NACS in the WCSD, specifically English language arts and literacy (ELA) and mathematics. He clarified the difference between standards and curriculum and provided information regarding the collaborative efforts taking place between the WCSD and other states and colleges.
- Aaron Grossman, Teacher on Special Assignment, Curriculum and Instruction Department, WCSD, detailed the three suggested ways for implementation of the CCSS. He presented a Microsoft PowerPoint titled “NACS/CCSS: Washoe’s Implementation Efforts,” that included: (1) implementation efforts; (2) standards; (3) core task project; (4) instructional shift; (5) complex text; (6) materials; (7) conflict and compromise in Nevada; and (8) examples and a YouTube video. (Please see [Exhibit L](#) and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eSYiwPJFMM8>.)
- Linnea Wolters, Teacher and Implementation Specialist, WCSD, provided details of teacher trainings for the NACS and the renewed enthusiasm resulting from the new standards.

- Vickie Collaro, K-6 Math Program Coordinator, Curriculum and Instruction Department, WCSD, presented details regarding the development and implementation of the math curriculum. She noted the curriculum is being rewritten each year as needs evolve.
- Chair Woodhouse commented the WCSD's implementation of the NACS is impressive and asked about the flexibility available to create and implement a lesson for a specific standard.
- Mr. Grossman replied teachers have a tremendous amount of latitude to determine curriculum to reinforce evidence-based learning.
- Ms. Wolters responded teachers are given the ability to pick their own lessons and to combine multiple standards in one lesson.
- Ms. Collaro added with math, the concepts are procedural and the WCSD teachers are moving toward conceptual curriculum and incorporating procedures.

Discussion ensued among Chair Woodhouse, Mr. Grossman, Ms. Wolters, and Ms. Collaro regarding the standards integrated into the classrooms in WCSD, the feedback from other teachers in the district, and standards Nevada might want to add to its curricula. Mr. Grossman cited the support of the educational community for the success of NACS in WCSD. Ms. Wolters added the current standards are a great base and framework, and opined it is too early to make changes. Ms. Collaro informed the standards for algebra and geometry are still in development.

### *Standards Implementation in the Classroom*

- Jacqueline Gillespie, Ed.D., Principal, Daniel F. Goldfarb Elementary School, CCSD, presented her school's journey from the Nevada State Standards (NSS) to the NACS, including implementation and curricula successes. She noted the NACS are standards not a curriculum, and opined students must be more engaged in their own learning.
- Jeremiah Norman, 5th Grade Teacher, Daniel F. Goldfarb Elementary School, CCSD, shared personal testimony of instruction in his classroom. He informed the CCSS are more about showing, modeling, and justifying. Mr. Norman showed two YouTube videos demonstrating the differences in lesson plan preparation for NACS versus NSS (<http://youtu.be/x6mZuYco0TY> and <http://youtu.be/q63dlhcxeBg>). He stated students should be taught perseverance, grit, and tenacity, and if successful, Nevada will have a better workforce.
- Assemblyman Munford commented on Mr. Norman's teaching style, enthusiasm, and motivation for teaching and thanked him for his contributions to education.



Discussion among Chair Woodhouse, Dr. Gillespie, and Mr. Norman ensued regarding the implementation of the NACS at Goldfarb Elementary, and whether the staff and administration had indicated satisfaction with the materials available for instruction of the new standards. Mr. Norman stated Goldfarb has been implementing the standards for a couple of years, and he had attended academies to learn new strategies for teaching the standards. Dr. Gillespie commented staff development is the key; teachers utilize resources and seem satisfied with the materials and support available.

- Chair Woodhouse called for public comment on Agenda Item No VI.
- Kelly Martinez, Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce, provided testimony regarding the need to improve Nevada's students' career-readiness. She indicated the Chamber supports NACS in hopes of improving Nevada's education standards for a qualified workforce in the future. Ms. Martinez submitted a document titled "Common Core College- and Career-Ready Standards". (Please see [Exhibit M.](#))
- Paul Modrakhan, Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce, provided testimony in support of NACS and indicated how the increase in standards will better prepare Nevada's students for the workforce.
- Amy Bauck, Clark County resident, provided testimony that Nevada did not have representation during the CCSS adoption process and added there was very little public comment made on the CCSS when they were being evaluated. (Please see [Exhibit E.](#))
- Dotty Merrill, Ph. D., Nevada Association of School Boards, provided a Resolution expressing support for the adoption and implementation of the NACS in Nevada. (Please see [Exhibit N.](#))
- Mr. Eppolito, President, Stop Common Core in Nevada, commented on NACS and questioned the standards for both college- and career-readiness.
- Fred Voltz, Carson City resident, commented on the CCSS and the open meeting laws related to NDE public hearings held prior to the adoption of the NACS. He expressed concern that working parents are unable to attend day meetings and raised budgetary concerns regarding the implementation of the NACS.
- Bob Clifford, Nevadans for Local Control of Education and Churchill County resident, stated the CCSS were adopted in Nevada under misrepresented information and they are not college-ready but community college-ready.
- Jim Falk, Chair, Nevadans for Local Control of Education and Churchill County resident, encouraged the LCE to repeal and defund the NACS.

- Darrell Drake, Washoe County resident, provided a document titled “Common Core State Standards–Nevada Must Proceed,” supporting the CCSS in Nevada. He encouraged the LCE to move forward with the NACS and implementation of the standards. Mr. Drake stated the new standards are far superior to the previous State standards. (Please see [Exhibit O](#).)

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Chair Woodhouse called for public comment on Agenda Item VII; however, none was presented.

The following is a list of persons who submitted documents for the record. All written testimony provided is included in the public record as an exhibit.

- Christy Armbruster, M.D., Elko County resident ([Exhibit P](#)).
- Frank Brittain, Ph.D., citizen of Nevada ([Exhibit Q](#)).
- Sandy Buchanan, citizen of Nevada ([Exhibit R](#)).
- Ron Darrow, Clark County resident ([Exhibit S](#)).
- Andrea Hughs-Baird, member Parent Leaders for Education and Washoe County resident ([Exhibit T](#)).
- Bonnie McDaniel, Clark County resident ([Exhibit U](#)).
- Debra Medellin, Clark County resident ([Exhibit V](#)).
- Nevada Manufacturers Association ([Exhibit W](#)).
- Parent Leaders for Education—Members e-mail responses ([Exhibit X](#)).
- Jim Sallee, Clark County resident ([Exhibit Y](#)).
- David Smith ([Exhibit Z](#)).
- April Tatro-Medlin, Clark County resident ([Exhibit AA](#)).
- Helen Thompson, Clark County resident ([Exhibit BB](#)).

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Tarron L. Collins  
Senior Research Secretary

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Todd M. Butterworth  
Senior Research Analyst

APPROVED BY:

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Senator Joyce Woodhouse, Chair

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **LIST OF EXHIBITS**

[Exhibit A](#) is the “Meeting Notice and Agenda” provided by Todd M. Butterworth, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau.

[Exhibit B](#) is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “Social and Emotional Learning in the Washoe County School District!” provided by Trish Shaffer, Coordinator, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support Division, Washoe County School District (WCSD).

[Exhibit C](#) written testimony dated April 22, 2014, submitted by Christina Leventis, Clark County resident.

[Exhibit D](#) is a letter dated April 22, 2014, to the Legislative Committee on Education (LCE) from Amy Bauck, Nevada resident.

[Exhibit E](#) is written testimony provided by Deb Neubecker, Clark County resident, titled “Why AB 288 Needs to be Revised?”

[Exhibit F](#) is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “The Value of Student Data-Balancing the Value against Risks and Fears of ‘Big Data,’” provided by Eric Creighton, Chief Operations Officer, Infinite Campus.

[Exhibit G](#) is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “Smarter Balanced Assessments: An Overview,” provided by Joe Willhoft, Ph.D., Executive Director, Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium.

[Exhibit H](#) is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation titled “Introduction and Meeting Format,” provided by John Eppolito, President, Americans for Better Schools.

[Exhibit I](#) written testimony dated April 22, 2014, titled “The Problems with the Common Core National Standards,” submitted by Jane Robbins, Senior Fellow, American Principles Project.

[Exhibit I-1](#) written testimony dated April 22, 2014, titled “Student-Privacy Aspects of the Common Core Standards Scheme,” submitted by Jane Robbins, Senior Fellow, American Principles Project.

[Exhibit J](#) is a report card document dated June 20, 2010, for Nevada presented by Michael Brickman, National Policy Director, Thomas B. Fordham Institute.

[Exhibit K](#) is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation dated April 22, 2014, titled “Legislative Committee on Education,” provided by Dale A.R. Erquiaga, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Nevada’s Department of Education.

[Exhibit L](#) is a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation dated April 22, 2014, titled “NACS/CCSS: Washoe’s Implementation Efforts,” provided by Aaron Grossman, Teacher on Special Assignment, Curriculum and Instruction Department, WCSD.

[Exhibit M](#) is a United States Chamber of Commerce document titled “Common Core College- and Career-Ready Standards,” offered by Kelly Martinez, Government Affairs Coordinator, Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce.

[Exhibit N](#) is a resolution by Nevada Association of School Boards submitted by Dotty Merrill, Ed.D., Executive Director, Nevada Association of School Boards.

[Exhibit O](#) is a document titled “Common Core State Standard–Nevada Must Proceed,” provided by Darrell Drake, Washoe County resident.

[Exhibit P](#) is written testimony dated April 22, 2014, provided by Christy Armbruster, M.D., Elko County resident,.

[Exhibit Q](#) is written testimony dated April 22, 2014, submitted by Frank Brittain, Ph.D., Nevada resident.

[Exhibit R](#) is written testimony provided by Sandy Buchanan, Nevada resident.

[Exhibit S](#) is written testimony dated April 17, 2014, offered by Ron Darrow, Clark County resident.

[Exhibit T](#) is written testimony dated April 22, 2014, presented by Andrea Hughs-Baird, member, Parent Leaders for Education and Washoe County resident.

[Exhibit U](#) is written testimony submitted by Bonnie McDaniel, Clark County resident.

[Exhibit V](#) is written testimony dated April 17, 2014, provided by Debra Medellin, Clark County resident.

[Exhibit W](#) is letter dated April 21, 2014, to Chair Woodhouse and the LCE members provided by Ray Bacon, Executive Director, Nevada Manufacturers Association.

[Exhibit X](#) is a compilation of e-mail responses from members of Parent Leaders for Education submitted by Andrea Hughs-Baird, Parent Leaders for Education.

- Greta Jensen
- Jill Tolles
- Tanja Hayes
- Mindy Lokshin
- Madeleine M. Palmer
- Gigi Chisel
- John Ellsworth
- Caryn Swope

[Exhibit Y](#) is a letter dated April 22, 2014, to the Members of the LCE provided by Jim Sallee, Clark County resident.

[Exhibit Z](#) is written testimony provided by David Smith.

[Exhibit AA](#) is a letter dated April 22, 2014, to the LCE offered by April Tatro-Medlin, Clark County resident.

[Exhibit BB](#) is a letter dated April 21, 2014, to the LCE authored by Helen Thompson, Clark County resident and submitted by Deb Neubecker, Clark County resident.

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](http://www.leg.state.nv.us/lcb/research/library/feedbackmail.cfm) or telephone: 775/684-6827.