



**NEVADA LEGISLATURE  
COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INTERIM STUDY  
CONCERNING COMMUNITY COLLEGES' SUBCOMMITTEE  
ON ACADEMICS AND WORKFORCE ALIGNMENT**

*(Senate Bill 391, Chapter 494, Nevada Revised Statutes 2013)*

**SUMMARY MINUTES AND ACTION REPORT**

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The fourth meeting of the Nevada Legislature's Committee to Conduct an Interim Study Concerning Community Colleges' Subcommittee on Academics and Workforce Alignment was held on Monday, June 2, 2014, at 9:00 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 3137 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada, and to Room 123 of the High Tech Center, 1500 College Parkway, Elko, 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/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:**

Assemblywoman Marilyn Kirkpatrick, Chair  
Senator Barbara K. Cegavske  
Kevin C. Melcher, Regent, Nevada System of Higher Education  
Chelsie Adams  
Umram Osambela  
Carole Vilardo  
Frank R. Woodbeck

**COMMITTEE MEMBER PRESENT IN CARSON CITY:**

Assemblyman Pat Hickey

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Timothy M. Dyhr  
Randy Soltero  
Michael E. Skaggs  
Vicky Van Meetren

**OTHER LEGISLATOR PRESENT:**

Assemblywoman Irene Bustamante Adams

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT:**

Kelly S. Richard, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division  
Diane C. Thornton, Senior Research Analyst, Research Division  
Brenda J. Erdoes, Legislative Counsel, Legal Division  
Karly O’Krent, Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division  
Christina Harper, Senior Research Secretary, Research Division

## **OPENING REMARKS**

Chair Kirkpatrick welcomed members, guests, and staff to the fourth meeting of the Subcommittee on Academics and Workforce Alignment and provided general Subcommittee information and testimony guidelines.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Kirkpatrick called for public comment; however, no testimony was presented.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON APRIL 24, 2014, IN LAS VEGAS, NEVADA**

- The Subcommittee **APPROVED THE FOLLOWING ACTION:**

SENATOR CEGAVSKE MOVED TO APPROVE THE “SUMMARY MINUTES AND ACTION REPORT” OF THE APRIL 24, 2014, MEETING HELD IN LAS VEGAS, NEVADA. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MS. VILARDO AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

## **REPORTS AND OTHER INFORMATIONAL ITEMS REGARDING ACADEMICS, WORKFORCE ALIGNMENT, AND OTHER ISSUES RELATING TO COMMUNITY COLLEGES OF THE NEVADA SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

- Frank R. Woodbeck, Executive Director, Nevada College Collaborative, Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE), provided information regarding a collaborative project between the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR) and NSHE on a unique data system created by Burning Glass Technologies. He stated the system matches individuals with jobs based on an analysis of resumes and job skills.
- Dennis A. Perea, Deputy Director/Interim Director, DETR, explained the system supplies real-time labor data to assist in matching unemployed individuals with available jobs.

There was discussion between Ms. Vilardo and Mr. Perea regarding the system’s job matching technology.

- Regent Melcher expressed support for the data system. He questioned how this software would help NSHE institutions determine coursework needs.
- Mr. Woodbeck responded skill set requirements delineated by employers could be used to determine course offerings. He added the system allows for an accurate matching of individuals with specific skill sets to jobs.

Responding to Regent Melcher's inquiry regarding an implementation timeline, Mr. Perea stated the project is dependent on reauthorization of the federal Workforce Investment Act and funding authority from the Nevada Legislature.

There was discussion between Ms. Vilardo and Mr. Woodbeck regarding the coordination and delivery of distance learning courses.

- Chair Kirkpatrick stated a work program to fund this system could come before the Interim Finance Committee prior to the 2015 Legislative Session.

In response to a question from Senator Cegavske, Mr. Perea stated DETR could identify individuals with no reportable wages in previous quarters. He reported the Southern Nevada Workforce Investment Board received a National Emergency Grant to assist long-term unemployed individuals no longer receiving benefits.

A discussion ensued among Chair Kirkpatrick and presenters regarding the collection of unemployment data. Mr. Woodbeck stated the Burning Glass system identifies unemployed individuals who do not seek training opportunities. Mr. Perea added a majority of individuals who lack marketable job skills and are uninterested in training are offered job search services.

- Mr. Woodbeck recommended establishing a Workforce Development Rapid Response Investment Fund to assist community colleges in meeting workforce needs by developing curricula and infrastructure for targeted industries ([Exhibit B](#)). He reviewed a proposed Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Workforce Challenge Grant Program to meet the workforce needs of Nevada's STEM economy ([Exhibit B-1](#)). The competitive grant program would award funding to regional consortia aligning postsecondary education and skills training with workforce demands.

There was discussion between Senator Cegavske and Mr. Woodbeck regarding the representation of industry sectors in the STEM Challenge Grant Program and course alignment between NSHE and the K-12 system.

- Regent Melcher and Ms. Adams recognized the participation of community colleges and the Nevada State College in the STEM Workforce Challenge Grant program.
- Regent Melcher was impressed with the business community's participation at Great Basin College's (GBC) Career and Technical Education Advisory Committee meetings.
- Michael Brown, member, Subcommittee on Governance and Funding, opined the business community has an obligation to be engaged in this process and understand community colleges are the center of workforce development.

- Chair Kirkpatrick noted businesses convey the importance of future workforce needs to higher education for the implementation of courses and training.

Discussion ensued among Chair Kirkpatrick, Mr. Osambela, and Ms. Vilardo regarding improving involvement and communication between businesses, trade associations, higher education, and students.

There was discussion among Subcommittee members regarding workforce training and the need for industry to outline future workforce needs.

Responding to an inquiry from Chair Kirkpatrick and Regent Melcher, Mark A. Curtis, Ph.D., President, GBC, stated academic and career and technical education (CTE) programs and resources are expanding to meet northern Nevada's workforce needs.

Responding to Chair Kirkpatrick's inquiry, Dan Gouker, Executive Director, Division of Workforce and Economic Development, College of Southern Nevada (CSN), explained the value of a certificate, the program completion period, and the process to change curriculum. He reiterated the importance of recognizing a student's needs, and the value of national certificates and CTE certificates of achievement.

- Chair Kirkpatrick recommended the Nevada Legislature provide guidance on establishing priorities to the industry sector councils. She asserted students should be encouraged to obtain an education at any level.
- Mr. Gouker agreed not everyone needs a degree to be successful. He stressed the importance of individual skills assessment for successful job placement.

A discussion ensued among Subcommittee members regarding:

- The perception of a certificate versus a four-year degree as a determinant of workplace success;
- Value placed on certificates both locally and nationally;
- Importance of dual credit programs; and
- Recognition of Nevada's educated workforce.
- Chair Kirkpatrick proposed a press release to be issued to call attention to the graduation rate and number of certificates awarded by Nevada institutions.

Discussion ensued among Chair Kirkpatrick, Mr. Osambela, and Mr. Gouker regarding communicating the value of state- and nationally-recognized certificates to trade associations.

- Senator Cegavske expressed frustration that Nevada's education system is lagging and changes need to be forthcoming as there continues to be disconnect between a student's needs, higher education, workforce development, and jobs.

She recommended improved communication between K-12 and the higher education system.

- Mr. Gouker reported CSN staff constantly review, refine, and update coursework responding to workforce and student needs.
- Mr. Woodbeck affirmed certificate programs are a hidden asset of the community colleges. He discussed progress in partnerships between industry and higher education to develop programs.
- Mr. Osambela requested the Subcommittee consider allowing community colleges to offer bachelor degrees in an effort to meet community and workforce needs.
- Chair Kirkpatrick recommended listing certificate programs in the course catalog with additional information to entice individuals to enroll in a program. She also suggested tracking those students to determine how many are employed in Nevada.

**WORK SESSION -- DISCUSSION OF AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT AN INTERIM STUDY CONCERNING COMMUNITY COLLEGES RELATING TO TOPICS DISCUSSED AT THIS AND PREVIOUS MEETINGS REGARDING ACADEMICS, WORKFORCE ALIGNMENT, AND OTHER ISSUES RELATING TO COMMUNITY COLLEGES OF THE NEVADA SYSTEM OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

- Chair Kirkpatrick acknowledged information provided by the Subcommittee on Governance and Funding.

A discussion ensued among Subcommittee members regarding a potential recommendation for the creation of a position of community college vice chancellor in the Nevada System of Higher Education to the full Committee to Conduct an Interim Study Concerning Community Colleges (S.B. 391). The conversation included the following points:

- The benefits to students and communities;
  - The position's appointment and reporting structure, responsibilities, and accountability to community college presidents and industry;
  - Preservation of independence for the position; and
  - A dedicated item for community colleges on agendas for meetings of the Board of Regents (Board).
- MR. OSAMBELA MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING CONSIDER A VICE CHANCELLOR BE CREATED WITHIN NSHE. REGENT MELCHER SECONDED THE MOTION.

Prior to a vote, Assemblyman Hickey and Ms. Adams emphasized the importance of soliciting input from community college presidents to be provided at the full Committee meeting.

Senator Cegavske expressed concerns regarding the motion and opined the creation of a vice chancellor position did not go far enough to address the problems faced by Nevada's community colleges.

- The Subcommittee **APPROVED THE FOLLOWING ACTION:**

THE PREVIOUS MOTION TO RECOMMEND THE CREATION OF A VICE CHANCELLOR POSITION, AS STATED BY MR. OSAMBELA AND SECONDED BY REGENT MELCHER, PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chair Kirkpatrick indicated she would also convey to Chair Smith of the Subcommittee on Governance and Funding that the Subcommittee on Academics and Workforce Alignment supported this concept. Chair Kirkpatrick reviewed a recommendation by Clark County Commissioner Chris Giunchigliani to increase community college and high school opportunities by expanding advanced placement courses, apprenticeship programs, certificate opportunities, and dual credit course offerings.

- SENATOR CEGAVSKE MOVED TO EXPRESS SUPPORT FOR THE EXPANSION OF OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND HIGH SCHOOLS TO INCLUDE DUAL CREDIT COURSEWORK, APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMS, CERTIFICATE OPPORTUNITIES, AND ADVANCED PLACEMENT COURSES. MR. WOODBECK SECONDED THE MOTION.

Prior to a vote, a discussion ensued among Subcommittee members regarding advanced placement courses offered in high schools and acceptance for college credit.

- The Subcommittee **APPROVED THE FOLLOWING ACTION:**

THE PREVIOUS MOTION REGARDING THE EXPANSION OF OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND HIGH SCHOOLS, AS STATED BY SENATOR CEGAVSKE AND SECONDED BY MR. WOODBECK, PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

A discussion ensued among Subcommittee members regarding diverse student challenges at the community college level and increased access to counseling services for college students. There was additional discussion regarding the need for counseling services to begin in high school.

- Chair Kirkpatrick advised the Legislative Committee on Education is considering recommendations to increase counseling services for high school and college students. She added this is an opportunity for coordination of counseling services.

- Regent Melcher recommended defining “counselor.”
- The Subcommittee **APPROVED THE FOLLOWING ACTION:**

MS. ADAMS MOVED THE SUBCOMMITTEE DRAFT A LETTER IN SUPPORT OF EXPANDED COUNSELING SERVICES, DEFINED AS A POSITION ACTING AS A WORKFORCE, JOB, COLLEGE READINESS, AND TRANSFER COORDINATOR AT THE HIGH SCHOOL, COMMUNITY COLLEGE, AND UNIVERSITY LEVELS WITH AN EMPHASIS ON STUDENT SERVICES, WITH A SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF AT-RISK STUDENTS. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY SENATOR CEGAVSKE AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

- Ms. Vilardo reiterated her concern regarding remedial coursework for students entering college.
- Chair Kirkpatrick recommended the community colleges evaluate advisory boards to determine their efficacy.
- Regent Melcher discussed supporting the Workforce Development Rapid Response Investment Fund and the STEM Workforce Challenge Grant Program, as proposed by Mr. Woodbeck. He intended to make a motion to express support for these grant programs to the Subcommittee on Academics and Workforce Alignment.
- MS. VILARDO MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES REVIEW ADVISORY BOARDS AND COMMITTEES TO MAKE A DETERMINATION CONCERNING POSSIBLE EXPANSION, CONSOLIDATION OR ELIMINATION. SENATOR CEGAVSKE SECONDED THE MOTION.

Prior to a vote, Regent Melcher expressed support for quality advisory boards. He opined it is the responsibility of the Presidents of each college to evaluate advisory boards.

- Chair Kirkpatrick expressed the need for stability and accountability in evaluations of advisory boards.
- Ms. Vilardo expressed frustration regarding continued complaints from constituents. She opined there are too many advisory boards.
- The Subcommittee **APPROVED THE FOLLOWING ACTION:**

THE PREVIOUS MOTION REGARDING ADVISORY BOARDS AS STATED BY MS. VILARDO AND SECONDED BY SENATOR CEGAVSKE PASSED WITH REGENT MELCHER IN OPPOSITION.



- Mr. Osambela stressed the importance of student financial aid. He recommended creating a need-based financial aid system. Chair Kirkpatrick indicated this should be reviewed by the full Committee.
- Mr. Osambela restated his desire for community colleges to have the ability to create bachelor degree programs to meet workforce needs.

A discussion ensued among Subcommittee members regarding the established NSHE process for community colleges to request a bachelor degree program and the flexibility necessary to meet the needs of the community. Further discussion ensued regarding the Board exploring options to allow community colleges to offer more bachelor's degrees, as necessitated by workforce demands.

- **MR. OSAMBELA MOVED TO RECOMMEND THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES TO BE ALLOWED TO CREATE BACHELOR DEGREE PROGRAMS, IF THERE IS A NEED WITHIN THE COMMUNITY. SENATOR CEGAVSKE SECONDED THE MOTION.**

Prior to a vote, there was discussion among Subcommittee members regarding the current bachelor degree program approval process and communication with students regarding degree programs.

- Michael Richards, Ed.D., President and Chief Executive Officer, CSN, affirmed the Board's policy allowing community colleges to provide niche bachelor degrees.
- Chair Kirkpatrick recommended sending a letter to the Board requesting an annual update to the Legislature regarding the bachelor degree program approval process or request NSHE to inform students of the approval process.
- Mr. Osambela rescinded his previous motion.
- Michael Brown, previously identified, suggested a freeze of community college tuition rates contingent upon a student's formal pledge to complete a program within a specific period. He pointed out this will help raise graduation rates.
- Chair Kirkpatrick stated she would add this recommendation to the letter she plans to send to Chairman Smith of the Subcommittee on Governance and Funding.
- Ms. Adams reported data from Nevada State College that indicates students enrolling with an associate's degree perform better than students who do not. She suggested emphasizing the completion of an associate degree program and collaborating as a system to raise graduation rates.
- Chair Kirkpatrick stated she would draft a letter to the Subcommittee on Governance and Funding for their June 9, 2014, meeting and the Committee to Conduct an Interim

Study Concerning Community Colleges for their June 17, 2014, meeting with the approved recommendations.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

- Magdalena Martinez, Ph.D., Director of Education Programs, The Lincy Institute, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, submitted two policy briefs: (1) “Understanding Nevada’s Higher Education Governance for Two-Year Colleges: Challenges and Solutions” ([Exhibit C](#)); and “The Case for a New College Governance Structure in Nevada: Integrating Higher Education with Economic Development” ([Exhibit C-1](#)).
- Irene Bustamante Adams, Assembly District No. 42, parent of a CSN student, and Chair of the Hispanic Legislative Caucus (Caucus), testified the Caucus has been discussing Hispanic community priorities, with an emphasis on education and community college governance. She indicated the Caucus is working with Hispanic organizations and community leaders to identify issues for possible bill draft requests. Assemblywoman Bustamante Adams expressed personal concern regarding the recommendation for a vice chancellor of the community college system.
- Brian McAnallen, Vice President, Government Affairs, Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce, discussed a community college governance structure providing academic and workforce support. He validated Subcommittee members’ comments and indicated it is time to clarify and set in statute continuity for students, higher education, and industry.
- John Johnson, community member and Director, Progressive Democrats of Nevada, Las Vegas, commented on the importance of education. He expressed support for the vice chancellor position. He supported the idea of a position to focus on community colleges with communication and collaboration with businesses and industry sectors. Mr. Johnson agreed counseling and communication needs to start at the high school level. He encouraged access for students to enroll in advanced placement or college preparatory courses for college credit. Mr. Johnson agreed the advisory boards should be evaluated for effectiveness.
- Chair Kirkpatrick announced the meeting of the Committee to Conduct an Interim Study Concerning Community Colleges would be held on June 17, 2014.

## ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 12:23 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

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Christina Harper  
Senior Research Secretary

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Kelly S. Richard  
Senior Research Analyst

APPROVED BY:

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Assemblywoman Marilyn Kirkpatrick, Chair

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

## LIST OF EXHIBITS

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

[Exhibit B](#) is a document titled “Workforce Development Rapid Response Investment Fund,” submitted by Frank R. Woodbeck, Executive Director, Nevada College Collaborative, Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE).

[Exhibit B-1](#) is a document titled “STEM Workforce Challenge Grant Program,” provided by Frank R. Woodbeck, Executive Director, Nevada College Collaborative, NSHE.

[Exhibit C](#) is a policy brief titled “Understanding Nevada’s Higher Education Governance for Two-Year Colleges: Challenges and Solutions,” presented by Magdalena Martinez, Ph.D., Director, Education Programs, The Lincy Institute, University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV).

[Exhibit C-1](#) is policy brief titled “The Case for a New College Governance Structure in Nevada: Integrating Higher Education with Economic Development,” offered by Magdalena Martinez, Ph.D., Director, Education Programs, The Lincy Institute, UNLV.

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.