

Members Present

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Quick recap

The group reviewed the commission's goals to create a long-term vision for Nevada to become an innovative world leader in education, and to achieve this vision through incentives, structural changes, and supports. They asked themselves what it would take to create a teacher in every classroom who could enable students to reach the competencies associated with the Portrait of a Learner. The team discussed the challenges and potential solutions in enabling more professional development sessions for teachers, with a focus on flexible grouping and self-directed learning. They considered the current teacher shortage in the state, the challenges and opportunities of changing requirements associated with teacher preparation, and the ways that policy could help nurture and support the profession.

Next steps

NCEE staff will ensure the AI Zoom companion captures all discussions while removing identifying information, and share the notes with the Chair and the full commission.

The chair will share key takeaways with the full commission during the panel discussion on June 4th.

NCEE will gather examples to inform the current discussion and future planning: successful teacher redesign initiatives in secondary education; insights from the implementation of flexible scheduling and mentorship structures in secondary schools; efforts to promote more effective school leaders

Summary

Subcommittee Kickoff:

Chair opened the meeting at 1:00pm. NCEE outlined the Commission's path forward and the commission's two-pronged deliverable: a long-term vision for Nevada to become an innovative world leader in creating a world-class teaching profession, and a roadmap to achieve this vision. NCEE then outlined the plan for future meetings, emphasizing the importance of using full commission meetings for subcommittees to meet and report. NCEE also stressed that the commission's work is not limited to the 83rd session and that they aim to create a long-term vision beyond it. NCEE also emphasized the importance of encouraging diverse viewpoints and perspectives, while following the Chatham House rule to ensure open discussion without attributing comments to individuals.

Creating a World-Class Teaching Profession in Nevada

Today's discussion would focus on comparing Nevada's education system to those of high-performing, rapidly innovating systems, amplifying bright spots in the state and identifying areas for improvement. NCEE emphasized the need for incentives, structural changes, and supports that go beyond funding to create the desired environment for all teachers. Members provided examples of such incentives and supports, highlighting that they could be in the form of time, opportunities, or funding for specific purposes like professional development or national board certification. Others then added the need to consider incentives for principals and administrators to facilitate these potential changes.

Members emphasized the importance of cross-fertilizing ideas across school districts and considering the broader context within the state. NCEE then transitioned the conversation to discuss the highest performing education systems globally and invited everyone to reflect on their state's performance. Research questions related to teacher recruitment, preparation, and retention were introduced as a framework for their comparison.

Teacher Retention: Addressing Persistent Teacher Shortages

The team discussed the current teacher shortage in the state, with approximately 2,000 vacancies, and the potential negative impact on student learning. They identified the lack of incentives and structural supports, as well as the negative external perception of the education profession, as key issues in attracting and retaining committed and diverse educators. The team emphasized the importance of teacher wellness, mental health, and the need for systemic changes to increase recognition of the teaching profession. They also discussed the idea of offering more flexible working arrangements, the importance of supportive leadership, and the challenges of implementing mentoring structures.

School Scheduling and Learning Models

Members discussed the structural differences between the school scheduling system in Nevada and other parts of the world, focusing on the importance of dedicated time for planning, professional learning, and individual meetings with families. They also explored a new system of self-directed learning and flexible groupings of students, emphasizing the need for teachers to dedicate time to their own learning. Lastly, the team discussed the importance of equal opportunities across districts and classrooms and teacher autonomy.

PLC Time, Competency-Based System, and Resources

The team discussed the use of PLC (Professional Learning Communities) time for mentorship and collaboration, as well as the importance of leadership direction in this area. They also talked about the potential for a shift to a competency-based system, the need for additional resources, and the importance of autonomy with guardrails. A system redesign project in California was discussed, along with a strategy to improve middle schools in a K-12 system. The team emphasized the importance of choosing a suitable starting point for district-wide changes and the need to re-evaluate teacher preparation and training methods.

The team will convene next on June 4th and will begin a deeper exploration. Chair closed the meeting at 2:30pm.