

**Nevada Department of Education  
Nevada State Board of Education  
March 12, 2025  
9:00 AM**

| Office                  | Address            | City        | Meeting                      |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------|------------------------------|
| Department of Education | 2080 E. Flamingo   | Las Vegas   | Room 114                     |
| Department of Education | 700 E. Fifth St.   | Carson City | Board Room                   |
| Department of Education | Virtual/Livestream | Virtual     | <a href="#">YouTube Link</a> |

**Draft Summary Minutes of the Board Meeting**

**Board Members Present**

Dr. Katherine Dockweiler, President  
Tim Hughes, Vice President  
Tamara Hudson, Clerk  
Dr. Tricia Braxton  
Annette Dawson Owens  
Tate Else  
Danielle Ford  
Michael Keyes  
Angela Orr  
Mike Walker

**Board Members Absent Excused**

None

**Department Staff Present**

Jhone Ebert, Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Ann Marie, Deputy Superintendent for Student Achievement Office  
Lisa Ford, Chief Strategy Officer  
Christy McGill, Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement  
Megan Peterson, Deputy Superintendent for Student Investment Division  
LaNesha Battle, Education Programs Director  
Barbara Bidell, Education Programs Professional  
Jennese Black, Education Programs Director  
Angie Castellanos, Administrative Assistant  
Felicia Gonzales, Consultant to the Superintendent  
Matt Hoffman, Education Programs Professional  
Joan Jackson, Education Programs Professional  
Shawna Jessen, Education Programs Director  
Mandy Leytham, Education Programs Professional  
Patti Oya, Education Programs Director  
Anna Reynolds, Education Programs Director  
Anna Severens, Education Programs Professional  
Jeremy Silva, Program Officer  
Rachel Tillotson, Education Programs Professional  
Lori Wilson, Nevada State Literacy Plan Contractor  
Julie Wooten-Greener, Public Information Officer

## **Legal Staff Present**

David Gardner, Senior Deputy Attorney General

## **Audience in Attendance**

Abraham Camejo, Community Member

Dr. Liz Glover, NAACP Education Committee

Ed Gonzalez, Hickey Elementary School

Dr. Linda Johnson-McClinton, NAACP Education Committee

### **1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance, and Land Acknowledgement**

Meeting called to order at 9:11 A.M. by President Dockweiler. Quorum was established. President Dockweiler led the Pledge of Allegiance and provided a land acknowledgement.

### **2. Public Comment #1**

- a) Ed Gonzalez, Community Member, Hickey Elementary School Organizational Team, provided public comment regarding agenda item 9.
- b) Abraham Camejo, Community Member, provided public comment regarding agenda item 9.  
(A complete copy of the statements are available in Appendix A)

### **3. Approval of Flexible Agenda**

**Member Hudson moved to approve a flexible agenda. Member Ford seconded. Motion passed.**

### **4. President's Report**

President Dockweiler welcomed new Board Member Dawson Owens and invited everyone to join in recognizing her. Member Owens expressed her gratitude for the opportunity to serve, sharing her background as a longtime Nevadan and educator in both district and charter schools. She noted her current role with the Children's Advocacy Alliance and her commitment to improving educational outcomes for Nevada's students and families. She expressed appreciation for the service of past and current Board members and looked forward to contributing to the work ahead. President Dockweiler welcomed her again and expressed enthusiasm for future collaboration.

President Dockweiler announced a special Board meeting on April 3 to address two key topics: the Read by Grade 3 assessment request for procurement (RFP) and the graduation score analysis. The Department has compiled relevant data and will present its findings. She requested that any Board member with a scheduling conflict notify the Board Secretary. The meeting is set to begin at 10:30 AM.

### **Board Training Report**

President Dockweiler reported that on February 22, the Board participated in a training session covering two key areas: statutory obligations and general procedures.

Regarding statutory obligations, the Board reviewed several sections of the Nevada Revised Statutes, including the process for selecting a State Superintendent of Public Instruction if needed. The selection process begins with the Nevada State Board of Education establishing criteria for the position in a public meeting, incorporating both statutory qualifications and additional competencies deemed necessary. Public input is solicited to ensure the selection criteria align with community expectations. The Board then forms a search subcommittee to guide the process.

Once the application period closes, the Board reviews submissions and selects a pool of candidates for public interviews. After deliberation, the Board identifies its top three candidates, who are then submitted to the Governor for the final appointment. This structured, transparent process ensures that Nevada's next

Superintendent of Public Instruction is chosen through a thorough and collaborative approach that reflects the priorities of both the Board and the broader community.

### **Board Member Updates**

President Dockweiler highlighted recent events recognizing education and child advocacy efforts across Nevada. Nevada Reading Week, held from March 3-7, aimed to inspire a love for reading statewide. Several Board members participated by reading at schools across the state. Additionally, School Social Worker Week, observed from March 3-9, acknowledged the vital role of school social workers in providing resources and support to students. She also noted that this week marks Children's Week at the Legislature (March 10-13), where advocates focus on key issues such as school readiness, children's physical and mental health, and child safety and security.

President Dockweiler provided an overview of the Board's updated procedural expectations. These changes aim to improve meeting flow and enhance public clarity and accessibility. She mentioned that key updates included the separation of Informational Updates from Consent Agenda Items. She clarified that Informational Updates consist of reports that must be shared with the Board but require no action, while Consent Agenda Items involve matters that require Board approval. President Dockweiler mentioned that this distinction ensures transparency and accessibility for the public.

President Dockweiler also mentioned that a Proposed Regulatory Initiatives section has also been added, allowing members to bring forward community concerns and potential solutions for Board consideration and that this aligns with the Board's commitment to being solution-focused and action-oriented. Additionally, Future Agenda Requests now include feedback loops to ensure information requests are addressed through multiple pathways. Requests may be elevated to formal agenda items, included in the President's report as an informational update, or addressed through a memo providing additional context. She also mentioned the order of Public Comment Period #2 and Future Agenda Item Requests has been switched and clarified that this change allows the Board to hear public comments first and then determine if any issues raised should be added to the future agenda.

Member Braxton reported hosting two events in Henderson aimed at amplifying youth voices, engaging individuals ages 17 to 26 and their mentors in discussions on civic engagement. The events were well received, and data was collected to inform her focus as an elected official. She also attended an education forum facilitated by the NAACP and the National Action Network, encouraging civic participation. During Reading Week, she visited Hickey Elementary, where she observed safety concerns, including a courtyard hazard preventing students from fully accessing a mural. Member Braxton acknowledged Children's Week at the Legislature, commending Member Dawson Owens for her efforts. She also recognized a sophomore at Coronado High School for his work addressing financial insecurity through a nonprofit that provides donated coats to students. She concluded with an inspiring phrase shared by Kate McLaughlin of Girls on the Run: *"Everything is figure-outable."*

Member Keyes provided updates on the Superintendent's Student Advisory Group for Education, which recently held its first two meetings. The group consists of about 20 diverse students from across the state. Discussions have focused on the legislative session, the Department of Education's priorities, and ways for students to get involved. The group also provided input on the SIP, with support from Ms. Lisa Ford and 2024 Teacher of the Year, Miss Penrod. Outside of State Board work, Member Keyes collaborated with Annie Batavia to launch the Nevada Association of Student Trustees, aimed at connecting students who serve on school boards. He also expressed support for AB 316, a bill advocating for student representation on local boards of trustees and announced plans to be in Carson City for the bill hearing.

Member Orr joined Superintendent Ebert in Reno to celebrate Allie Galas, the Milken Award winner from

Jesse Beck Elementary, who received \$25,000 as the Milken Teacher of the Year. Member Orr, who had previously trained Ms. Galas in teaching Nevada history, expressed excitement about witnessing the recognition of an outstanding educator at what is often called the "Oscars of teaching." Additionally, Member Orr was invited to speak at a UNR political science class about education. During the discussion, a student raised concerns about resources for homeless students in rural areas and suggested working with State Board members, including Member Keyes, to raise awareness. Member Orr highlighted these experiences as meaningful and impactful.

Member Hughes provided an update on the Commission on Innovation, noting that the scheduled meeting was postponed, leaving no new developments to report. A set of recommendations was sent to the legislature, and efforts are underway to refine and prioritize them, considering fiscal implications. Once more details emerge, Member Hughes will share updates and anticipates the full board will engage with the prioritized recommendations when available.

## 5. Superintendent's Report

Superintendent Ebert provided an update on key initiatives and developments within the Nevada Department of Education. She began by recognizing Allie Galas, a fourth-grade teacher at Jessie Beck Elementary in Washoe County, as the recipient of the prestigious Milken Educator Award, often referred to as the "Oscars of Teaching." This honor, which includes a \$25,000 award, acknowledges Ms. Galas' exceptional contributions to student learning and leadership. Her innovative, student-centered approach has led to significant academic growth, particularly among English language learners. By incorporating hands-on lessons, student-led conferences, and restorative practices, she has created an engaging and effective learning environment. As Nevada's sole recipient this year, Ms. Galas will join an esteemed network of educators and attend the Milken Educator Awards Forum in Los Angeles this April.

Superintendent Ebert then highlighted the recent celebration of Nevada Reading Week, which took place from March 3 to March 7 under the theme "Color Our World with Books." For nearly four decades, Nevada Reading Week has encouraged students to develop a lifelong love of reading. This year's events included access to PebbleGo by Capstone, the Nevada Reading Week Conference, the Author LIVE event, and curated booklists from TeachingBooks, alongside numerous school, district, and community celebrations. The Nevada Reading Week Conference brought together 164 participants, including PreK-12 educators, librarians, parents, and community members, who had the opportunity to engage with speakers such as Dr. Nell Duke, Dr. Ernest Morrell, John Trischitti, and Dr. Danny Brassell. Each attendee received a selection of books to further support literacy efforts. The Author LIVE event saw participation from 2,812 classes, reaching approximately 31,944 students. Featured authors included local writers Apryl Stott, Mimi Powell, and Arree Chung, as well as nationally recognized authors Brad Meltzer and Bao Phi. Classes that attended Meltzer's event received an autographed copy of *Ordinary People Can Change the World*. In addition, Vegas PBS recognized Kaelynn Kindred as the student of the month for designing the Nevada Reading Week logo, with her feature scheduled to air around March 10. Superintendent Ebert expressed her appreciation for the educators, school leaders, librarians, students, and families who contributed to the success of this year's Reading Week and continued to promote literacy across the state.

She continued by discussing the Superintendent's Student Advisory Group for Education, known as NV SAGE, which held its first meeting in January. Under the leadership of Board Member Keyes and 2024 Teacher of the Year Laura Jeanne Penrod, NV SAGE provides a platform for students to engage in discussions on school climate, student well-being, academic achievement, and education policy. By incorporating student perspectives, the group helps ensure that educational policies and initiatives reflect the real needs and experiences of those in the classroom. During their first meeting, members selected a new logo designed by Southwest Career and Technical Academy students under the guidance of their graphic arts teacher, Mrs. Gonzalez. The final design, created by student Amerie Ignacio, was chosen after

thoughtful consideration of contributions from Alejandro Tulio and Jasmine Chanhthavong. Superintendent Ebert expressed her enthusiasm for working with such a dedicated group of students and looks forward to their insights on improving education in Nevada.

Providing an update on legislative matters, she shared that the Nevada Department of Education has been actively engaged in the current session, presenting key initiatives and budget priorities. The Department has outlined funding needs for K-12 and Special Education to ensure resources are allocated effectively to support both students and educators. Among the legislative efforts, Assembly Bill 24 focuses on Competency-Based Education and introduces the Portrait of a Nevada Learner, emphasizing a personalized approach to student success. Additional legislative discussions have addressed bilingual education, educator pay, and governance structures, with the Department providing insights and expertise to help shape strong policy decisions. Superintendent Ebert reaffirmed the Department's commitment to advocating for policies that enhance education and improve student outcomes across Nevada.

Turning to national updates, she discussed recent federal guidance issued by the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights. On February 14, a Dear Colleague Letter was released, outlining updated expectations for civil rights compliance in schools. Alongside this, the federal government provided FAQs clarifying how schools should approach diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives while ensuring alignment with federal law. The Office for Civil Rights homepage now features a DEI compliance reporting form, signaling increased federal oversight and potential enforcement actions regarding civil rights policies in schools. She also noted that discussions are ongoing about restructuring responsibilities within the U.S. Department of Education, which could affect how services and funding are administered at the federal level. However, the full implications of these changes remain uncertain.

Superintendent Ebert assured that the Nevada Department of Education is closely monitoring these developments and reviewing all available federal guidance. Once definitive information is available, the Department will provide clear and timely updates to districts and schools, ensuring compliance while maintaining a strong commitment to supporting education for all students.

**6. Informational Updates** (*Information Only*)

President Dockweiler introduced a new agenda section aimed at providing key updates on Nevada's education system. These informational updates did not require Board approval but served to fulfill reporting requirements from districts and charter schools while also highlighting important developments from the Nevada Department of Education. The goal was to keep stakeholders, including districts, schools, educators, and the public, informed about progress and key initiatives. After inviting questions from Board member, she noted that there were none.

**7. Consent Agenda** (*For Possible Action*)

**Member Ford moved to approve a flexible agenda. Member Hudson seconded. Motion passed.**

**8. Proposed Regulatory Initiatives**

President Dockweiler introduced a discussion on potential regulatory actions for further consideration, emphasizing the Board's commitment to responsive governance. Board members could propose issues for discussion based on constituent engagement or stakeholder feedback. The Board President, in collaboration with the State Superintendent, would determine whether an item should be included on a future agenda. Items not added would be referenced in the Board President's report. This process ensured that proposed initiatives were carefully reviewed and aligned with strategic priorities, regulatory responsibilities, and the needs of Nevada's education system.

She then outlined three discussion items on the agenda. The first addressed protections for district

employees serving on Boards, as many educators appointed to Boards under the Department of Education's purview, such as the Teachers and Leaders Council and the Commission on Professional Standards in Education, had faced penalties or were not released from work to fulfill their Board duties.

The second item focused on protections for families and caregivers in cases of bullying, as required notifications were often delayed or not provided in alignment with statutes and regulations.

The third item concerned respecialization advancement for licensed educators, highlighting issues where educators pursuing advanced degrees were not always moved up the salary schedule in a manner that accurately reflected their qualifications.

President Dockweiler invited additional items for consideration and asked if Board members had any questions.

Member Braxton emphasized the significant concerns surrounding retaliation in the current climate and the importance of fair compensation for teachers who invest their own time and money. Highlighting financial insecurity, Member Braxton stressed the need to revisit these issues, engage with the community, and listen to community members' perspectives.

Member Orr commented on state laws requiring extensive paperwork and follow-up in bullying cases. While the laws are clear and specific, she expressed confusion regarding the request being made. She noted concerns that parents are not receiving timely information and emphasized that accusations must be followed up with a report to those making the claims.

Member Hudson noted that schools were becoming overwhelmed due to the reporting requirements for bullying. She explained that when a student mentions bullying, a full report must be completed, sometimes leading to numerous reports for a single incident. With only 48 hours to investigate, schools often struggled to keep up. She pointed out that misunderstandings about bullying, such as minor playground incidents being classified as bullying, contributed to the burden. Member Hudson suggested the need to clarify definitions and provide guidance to help schools manage these challenges more effectively.

Member Braxton acknowledged the established procedures for handling bullying reports but raised concerns about disparities in schools' capacity to manage them. She questioned how reporting requirements varied and emphasized the importance of airing on the side of caution to ensure student safety. Member Braxton expressed appreciation for the discussion and looked forward to reviewing more data to support students, teachers, and families effectively.

## **9. Information, Discussion, and Possible Action on AB469 Subcommittee**

President Dockweiler led a discussion on the AB469 Subcommittee, covering its membership, roles, and responsibilities. The Board also had the opportunity to make modifications to the subcommittee's leadership and composition.

She provided an overview of the subcommittee's past actions, explaining that it was convened in late 2021 in response to public concerns and a request from CCSD for clarification on the Reorganization Law (NRS 388G). The Board identified six key areas for action, including defining key terms, requiring mandatory training, refining teacher selection procedures, expanding the dispute resolution process, and considering the appointment of a compliance monitor for CCSD. After months of meetings and the formal regulation process, the Board adopted three regulations to address these issues.

President Dockweiler emphasized that the Board and its subcommittee now oversee an expanded

dispute resolution process for concerns related to NRS 388G. Constituents with unresolved noncompliance issues were encouraged to follow the Compliance Dispute process available on CCSD's [reorg.ccsd.net](http://reorg.ccsd.net) website. If a resolution was not reached, the issue could be escalated to the State Board. However, the subcommittee retained the authority to address matters outside this process. Any recommendations from the subcommittee required a vote from the State Board, and the subcommittee could also propose new regulations or request an investigation by the State Superintendent under NRS 388G.570. Requests for information or communication with CCSD had to go through the Board President and State Superintendent.

Previously, the subcommittee included Mark Newburn, Rene Cantu, and President Dockweiler, along with former CCSD Trustee Lisa Guzman. President Dockweiler had served as chair but opted not to continue in that role as Board President.

**New subcommittee members included Members Braxton, Member Ford, and Member Hudson, with President Dockweiler recommending Member Braxton as the new Chair.**

Following discussion, President Dockweiler invited questions and comments before calling for a motion. The Board proceeded with a vote on the proposed changes.

**Vice President Hughes moved to approve Member Braxton, Member Hudson, and Member Ford as the subcommittee with Member Braxton serving as chair. The Subcommittee would establish parameters for potential additional members and return to the Board with recommendations for a vote. Member Hudson seconded. Motion passed.**

#### **10. Information, Discussion, and Possible Action on the Statewide Plan for the Improvement of Pupils (STIP)**

Chief Strategy Officer Lisa Ford presented the [Statewide Plan for the Improvement of Pupils \(STIP\) 2030](#), required under Nevada law to enhance student achievement. The plan aligns state mandates with actionable initiatives, measurable results, and community involvement to drive meaningful change in education. Key themes from stakeholder feedback included teacher recruitment and retention, concerns about over-testing and accountability, and the need for greater transparency and equitable resource distribution. The plan emphasizes flexibility, continuous improvement, and stakeholder collaboration, incorporating insights from surveys, commissions, and councils.

The board reviewed elements of the plan, including strategic targets, initiatives, and performance indicators. Discussions highlighted the importance of streamlining teacher licensing, ensuring clarity on charter school curriculum requirements, and addressing rural school district challenges. The Department of Education committed to ongoing updates, resource alignment, and support to drive progress, with board members raising additional questions and considerations.

Member Orr emphasized that charter schools are not required to use state-adopted curriculum, advocating for clarity in the document regarding the use of high-quality instructional materials across all schools.

Members' discussions highlighted the need for the state to identify and mobilize resources effectively, ensuring technical assistance and professional development support.

Superintendent Ebert acknowledged improvements in rural school districts, particularly in staffing and access to coursework funded through federal programs. However, she stressed that further support from the Department of Education is necessary.

Member Hughes expressed concerns about the strategic document's lack of focus, questioning whether its goals align with the State Board of Education's vision. He suggested a more precise approach, identifying key challenges and prioritizing the most impactful interventions. He also criticized the academic goals for lacking ambition, advocating for more substantial improvements in student outcomes.

Member Ford supported these concerns, noting rapid advancements in AI that could significantly reshape education. She suggested a phased approach to educational strategy, likening it to a medical diagnosis and treatment plan, first protecting existing structures, then implementing targeted improvements based on data analysis.

Discussions also touched on best practices from other states, such as Mississippi and Louisiana, which have seen success due to uniform curriculum requirements and centralized hiring of specialists. However, Nevada's decentralized structure presents challenges in adopting similar strategies without legislative changes.

Overall, members agreed that the document should be flexible and adaptive, evolving alongside policy, technological, and educational shifts.

Member Orr stated that she wanted the State Board to prioritize this responsibility again. She believed that input should be gathered behind the scenes before being presented at meetings. She suggested that if Member Hughes had the time and energy over the next six months, it would be beneficial for a board member to assist the department. She also expressed appreciation for the revisions made and emphasized the importance of board members providing feedback throughout the process. Vice President Hughes was recognized as a willing participant, particularly in Southern Nevada.

**The motion was to approve the STIP as presented while amending it to include a cover letter developed in collaboration with the Department of Education. The cover letter would acknowledge that the STIP is being adopted in a constantly evolving environment and that revisions will be necessary. The board committed to revisiting the STIP in six months to assess progress, changes in the education system, and any additional elements that provide greater specificity. The amendment was further refined to include "changing environment and community input."**

**The motion passed with six votes in favor: Member Ford, Member Hudson, President Dockweiler, Member Braxton, Member Orr, and Member Owens and one opposed: Member Hughes.**

## **11. Information and Discussion Regarding the Nevada State Literacy Plan**

The Board received a presentation on the implementation of the revised [2025 Nevada State Literacy Plan \(NSLP\)](#). Shawna Jessen, Director of the Office of Teaching and Learning, along with Jennese Black and Rachel Tillotson, Education Program Professionals for ELA, and Lori Wilson, the NSLP Coordinator, outlined the plan's purpose: to provide flexible, accessible, and targeted professional development supporting statewide literacy goals.

Ms. Black detailed the implementation strategy, emphasizing asynchronous learning, in-person and virtual formats, and printed materials. The plan included distributing 2,000 copies of the NSLP to districts and curriculum directors, alongside an infographic and an ADA-compliant digital version. Training sessions were designed for various audiences, including literacy specialists, administrators, and educators seeking micro-credentialing.



The timeline projected major implementation components through Fall 2025. Initial in-person training sessions were scheduled for April and May, with additional virtual options. The micro-credentialing program aimed to train cohorts of 35 educators per six-week cycle. The team planned to assess implementation through professional learning groups, ongoing evaluations, and follow-up surveys.

Board members raised concerns about ensuring professional development which led to meaningful classroom changes and inquired about measuring the program's impact. Presenters emphasized plans for administrator-focused training and ongoing support for literacy leads, who would disseminate knowledge to their respective school communities.

The discussion also addressed compensation for educators participating in training and the need for micro-credentialing programs to be formally recognized by districts. The presenters confirmed alignment with district requirements and ongoing collaboration with regional professional development programs (RPDPs) to support implementation.

## **12. Information and Discussion Regarding the Birth – 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade (B-3) in Nevada: A State and District Perspective**

The Board received a presentation on [Birth to Third Grade \(B-3\)](#) reforms, highlighting key initiatives and their impact on early learning in Nevada. The presentation was led by Patty Oya, Director of the Office of Early Learning and Development, along with Rachel Stepina, Grant Manager for the Preschool Development Grant, and Anna Severin, Education Program Professional.

Ms. Oya introduced Ms. Severin and Ms. Stepina, emphasizing their roles in overseeing various B-3 projects. Ms. Severin has taken on responsibilities related to kindergarten entry, kindergarten transition, and the Early Educator of the Year award. Ms. Stepina played a key role in securing and managing the Preschool Development Grant, which has funded multiple system-level projects and will conclude at the end of the year.

Ms. Severin provided an overview of B-3 reform efforts, explaining the alignment with Nevada's Statewide Plan for the Improvement of Pupils (STIP). The reform framework, based on the National P-3 Center model, aims to bridge early childhood education (birth through age five) and the K-3 system. The framework focuses on eight key areas: administrative effectiveness, teacher effectiveness, learning environments, instructional tools, data-driven improvement, family engagement, workforce development, and alignment with the science of reading and whole-child learning principles.

The presentation highlighted key drivers for implementing B-3 reforms, including alignment with the Read by Grade 3 initiative, competency-based learning, and the Portrait of a Learner model. The reforms are designed to support instructional coherence and provide early learners with a strong foundation through research-based best practices.

Over the past five years, Nevada has made significant progress in B-3 initiatives. In 2020, the state established a Nevada Leadership Certificate program in partnership with the National P-3 Center. Additionally, kindergarten and first-grade cohorts were formed with support from the Preschool Development Grant and Title II funding. Other notable developments include the 2022 approval of the state's Developmentally Appropriate Kindergarten Policy Statement, the expansion of early childhood endorsement programs, and the launch of an annual statewide P-3 Summer Retreat.

The presentation also covered Nevada's participation in the 2024 National P-3 Institute, where two teams—one at the state level and one at the district level—engaged in professional learning focused on strengthening instructional coherence, leadership development, and equitable high-quality instruction.

Nevada's participation included representatives from the Nevada Department of Education, regional professional development programs, higher education institutions, and school districts (Elko, Nye, Clark, and Washoe).

The state team developed a systems target to create a unified communication strategy ensuring that stakeholders receive consistent messaging on best practices in early learning. Five belief statements were drafted to guide B-3 efforts, and leadership meetings were established to maintain momentum. At the district level, new leadership positions dedicated to P-3 alignment have been created, and initiatives have expanded to support developmentally appropriate practices, educator tools, and transition programming for incoming kindergarten students.

Senior Deputy Attorney General Gardner addressed state spending obligations, explaining that funding decisions required adherence to the request for procurement (RFP) process.

The team highlighted the significance of developmentally appropriate practices, challenging the notion that rigor and play-based learning were mutually exclusive. They referenced Alabama's success in early math fluency as a model. Sustainability concerns regarding federal funding were discussed, with Superintendent Ebert emphasizing efforts to institutionalize early learning systems and secure ongoing state funding for pre-K initiatives.

Board members engaged in discussions about coherence in birth-to-three education, emphasizing the need for alignment, accountability, and best practice dissemination to improve early childhood education outcomes.

### **13. Information and Discussion Regarding the Read by Grade 3 Task Force Update**

The presentation provided an overview of the [Read by Grade 3](#) Task Force, its structure, progress, and next steps. Joan Jackson and Mandy Leytham from the Nevada Department of Education outlined the task force's purpose, its diverse membership, and the four working groups conducting research on the implementation of Read by Grade Three programs in other states.

The task force, established in October, focused on the statutory requirements and good cause exemptions related to student retention under Nevada law. Research included an analysis of other states' mandatory retention policies, assessments used to measure reading proficiency, and portfolio-based exemptions. Findings indicated that all states with retention clauses use state-specific assessments developed in collaboration with assessment companies. Additionally, Alabama was revising its cut scores after initially setting them too low.

Work groups also examined good cause exemptions, particularly those related to student portfolios, English learners, and students with special education services or 504 plans. The presentation concluded with a review of state assessment practices and considerations for potential revisions to Nevada's approach.

### **14. Information and Discussion Regarding the English Language Arts (ELA) Standard Framework**

The board received a presentation on the [Nevada State English Language Arts \(ELA\) standards](#) and instructional frameworks from Deputy Superintendent Ann Marie Dixon, Director Shawna Jessen, and Education Program Professional Rachel Tillotson. Deputy Superintendent Dixon expressed appreciation for the opportunity to present, highlighting the committee's extensive work on ELA standards.

Ms. Tillotson provided an overview of the review process, which began in spring 2024 with a survey assessing the need for updates. Based on feedback, a committee was formed, including representatives from

all 11 districts and charters, administrators, parents, literacy specialists, and teachers. The committee examined standards from multiple states, focusing on layout, content, and research-based practices such as the science of reading, technology integration, and equity considerations.

The committee concluded that Nevada's ELA standards aligned with national expectations but required additional support for implementation. Rather than revising the wording of the standards, they recommended developing a framework with guidance, including an improved document layout, hyperlinked resources, printable formats, and instructional examples. The framework aimed to support educators in applying the standards effectively while maintaining alignment with the Nevada State Literacy Plan.

Board members inquired about the approval process, with Senior Deputy Attorney General David Gardner clarifying that while the standards' wording remained unchanged, modifications to the supporting document required board approval. The board acknowledged the importance of the revisions and anticipated reviewing the final document for approval in the coming months.

## **15. Public Comment #2**

Public comment was received by the following:

- a) Dr. Linda Johnson-McClinton
- b) Dr. Elizabeth Glover
- c) Ed Gonzalez

*(A complete copy of the statements are available in Appendix A)*

## **16. Future Agenda Items Requests**

Member Braxton requested an improvement in public understanding of the state's educational structure, including the roles of the State Board of Education, the Nevada System of Higher Education, and local school boards. She also raised concerns about school maintenance issues, such as HVAC and irrigation, and sought clarification on accountability, procedures, and response timelines. Additionally, they requested a definition of what constitutes a "timely" response.

Member Keyes proposed developing an open letter or communication to the public regarding the state of education in Nevada. The goal was to explain the roles of various educational authorities at the federal, state, and local levels while addressing public concerns.

Member Hughes requested a review of the Commission on Innovation's recommendations to determine whether the board should formally support or oppose them before legislative action. He also called for a reevaluation of board goals, particularly those relying on outdated or discontinued measures, such as Quality Counts. Additionally, Member Hughes suggested examining issues related to discipline and retaliation against public employees who are also parents or board members. They proposed that these concerns be considered either by the AB 469 committee or in a broader regulatory discussion.

## **17. Adjournment**

Meeting was adjourned at 2:10 P.M.

## **Appendix A: Statements given during public comments**

- 1. Ed Gonzalez, Community Member
- 2. Abraham Camejo, Community Member

**Appendix A, Item 1: ED GONZALEZ**

For the record, my name is Ed Gonzalez.

I am the Community Member and newly elected Vice Chair of the Hickey Elementary School Organizational Team, but I am speaking as an individual.

Before I get started, Madam President, I want to congratulate Member Annette Dawson Owens. I think she will be a great addition to this Board. I've known her for a long time, and her background in education, especially on this topic, is extensive. Speaking on item nine regarding AB 469, she has a deep history with this issue. She also served on a School Organizational Team, so I just want to congratulate her.

I know she is in Carson City, but to get started, I want to talk about item nine. You're discussing the subcommittee, and we've seen a lot happening in education recently, especially the Superintendent search and the conversations surrounding it. One of the questions I was asked was, "What do you expect, or what should the subcommittee look at?" A comment that stood out was, "Are we even asking the right questions?" This law has been in place for eight years.

I don't think the subcommittee should focus on minor technical violations of the law. The State Board has already created a process for addressing those concerns. Instead, the subcommittee should be looking at the bigger picture. Are the intended outcomes of the law being realized?

We see reports sent to the State Superintendent and the Legislature detailing how the district wants to centralize operations, despite the law calling for decentralization. However, within those reports, the district also expresses concerns. Some of these concerns should be fully vetted. What are the district's concerns? At times, it feels like the district is just a punching bag in different committees, whether at the Legislature, the State Board, or even within its own Board.

We should address some of these key issues. For example, budgetary concerns, how did the average teacher salary increase by \$5,600 from spring to fall? How much additional funding was allocated to schools to accommodate that increase? How are schools managing it? These are the types of questions we should be examining.

I know Abraham Camejo will speak on maintenance issues, specifically regarding construction delays. There is a section of the law that addresses timely construction, and I know some Members here have visited Hickey Elementary, where we experienced maintenance issues. Some of these issues persisted for ten months. At what point are we allowed to look outside the system for solutions? When can we seek alternatives if the system itself is not resolving these concerns?

Additionally, I believe the committee should include more community members or individuals who serve on School Organizational Teams (SOTs). The Legislature did this before with the SOT working group in 2017–2018. I believe Senator Becky Harris and Senator Mo Denis had members on that group to gather insights. We have people who have served on SOTs, including district staff, and their perspectives are valuable. I also thought it was beneficial to have a trustee on the committee.

There are many aspects to consider, but I don't want to take too much time, as I know broader conversations will take place. As we move forward, we should be looking at broader systemic issues, what does autonomy really look like? The district has documents outlining the limits of autonomy, but is that the right approach? Should we be reconsidering how we frame these discussions?

We need to reflect on past efforts and determine if any changes are necessary. However, since some of these measures have not yet been fully implemented, it is difficult to assess their impact. This should be an ongoing, long-term conversation, not just in preparation for this legislative session, but for the next one as well, so we can approach it with a clear direction.

**Appendix A, Item 2: ABRAHAM CAMEJO**

Good morning.

My name is Abraham Camejo. I am the construction liaison for the school district's Bond Oversight Committee. I'm also a parent and actively involved in the community.

My background is in general contracting. I am a contractor by trade and also a safety risk manager. I've been in this field for more than twenty-five years. I started at a very young age, at fourteen, so by the time I was in high

school, I was already running my business.

I'm here today to initiate a more detailed conversation about the scope of work in our schools, specifically the work that is not being completed. As I visit schools, particularly during Reading Week, I tend to notice construction defects.

During Reading Week, I visited a school where the entire roof and ceiling had collapsed in a classroom. At another school, I saw a sinkhole with sewage issues. The principal had been trying to get repairs done since May. So, the question is: what is considered a "timely manner" for repairs?

At Rancho High School, where I serve on the SOT, the elevator was broken and remained unfixed for two months. That is a clear ADA compliance issue, yet it wasn't addressed in a timely manner.

When a bathroom has plumbing issues and a stall is out of order, a student has to walk down the hall or to another part of the school just to use the restroom. The principal cannot address these maintenance issues because maintenance responsibilities are shifting from general maintenance to bond funds. Instead of making necessary repairs, we are now spending money on complete replacements.

As our schools age, maintenance needs increase, and we need to have a serious conversation about the scope of work and the timelines for repairs. If you were a tenant in an apartment complex and had no working air conditioning, I would have forty-eight hours to resolve the issue, or I'd be sending you to the Bellagio to stay elsewhere because of the heat.

I found a report from the school district stating that more than ninety schools have air conditioning issues. That is a major problem, not only for students and their learning environment but also for the safety and well-being of teachers and staff.

This is a much broader conversation, and I'm bringing it to light because, together, we can work toward a solution. The key question is: what is the timeline for repairs? Some repair requests are taking over a year to be resolved. We cannot continue placing mobile classrooms in parking lots and playgrounds without addressing the root issues.

Thank you so much for your time. If you have any questions, please reach out to me. I have a wealth of knowledge in this area, and I do this because, above all else, I am a dad. Thank you.

### **Appendix A, Item 3: DR. LINDA JOHNSON-MCCLINTON**

Good afternoon, members of the board and the public. I am Dr. Linda Johnson McClinton. I come to you today as the Education Chair for NCBW, which is the National Coalition of 100 Black Women, as well as an Education Committee Member for the NAACP. I also serve as an education consultant within our community. Within the community world that I advocate for, the big concern is, as a result of what's going on at the national level, how specifically is the Board of Education preparing to pivot? We know we heard about that earlier this morning, that there are things being planned, but from the public's perspective, they are looking to see something forward-facing to at least get a sense of what is possible so the community can make informed decisions. That is a large concern out there, and I want to make sure it is brought to our attention.

Additionally, there are concerns regarding Medicaid. As a reminder, the Medicaid piece is coming up, and if, unfortunately, Medicaid is cut, the community is concerned about how the Department of Education will respond regarding students who will be required to have physicals to attend school for the upcoming school year but may not have the medical coverage to do so. They want to know what that will look like, will students continue to be put out in early fall because they may not have their physicals?

The second piece I wanted to share is that as of January of this year, I am the point person for our state as it relates to the After School Alliance. I travel back and forth to Washington, D.C. to discuss the concerns we have across our entire state regarding after-school funding, needs, and impacts. As we know, due to some budget concerns beyond our control, schools that were self-funding will not have after-school programs next year. Additionally, a large number of schools never had the funding to begin with.

As a reminder to the board, our state is one of 13 states across the nation that does not fund after-school programs. We want to make sure we bring this to your attention. I will be traveling back and forth to Washington, D.C., and I look forward to working with you all because I want to be able to take our concerns, and any possible solutions, to D.C. as we advocate for this change.

Thank you for all your contributions, the work that you're doing, and for being here today.

**Appendix A, Item 4: DR. ELIZABETH GLOVER**

I am Dr. Elizabeth Glover. I serve as well on the NAACP Education Committee, as well as the Education Committee for the National Coalition of 100 Black Women. Within my personal capacity, as well as hearing the voice of those communities, I go in and advocate for a lot of students in the school, but a lot of that ends up becoming sitting through a lot of expulsion hearings.

There are some concerns I wanted to bring to the board's attention, specifically as it relates to NRS 392, built around the reduction of exclusionary discipline. It is supposed to see an increase in restorative **justice and a** decrease in suspension and expulsion. I want to bring to the body's attention that trending throughout at least CCSD, that is not what's happening.

Earlier, I heard you all mention data-driven decision-making with some of the plans that are coming down the pipeline. Even that goes back to NRS 388, which requires data-driven decision-making. But what we're seeing is premature disciplinary decisions without full investigations. As soon as there's a situation within our schools, the immediate response is to remove all involved students, despite who may be the victim, despite any context that would help inform that decision. Then these students are displaced academically, socially, mentally, and emotionally for days. Sometimes, when those students are discovered to indeed be victims, there is no restoration offered to them for what they lost.

Additionally, as it relates to the behavior detail reports, these reports are being used as weapons at expulsion hearings to expel students. Most of our parents have never even heard of them, let alone seen them or the things that are in them. What we have had building principals tell us in that behavior detail report, emphasis on the "D" for detail, is that it would be too cumbersome to actually put the detail in there. This is because if it is asked for, they would have to go through the trouble of redacting personal information. So, they are loading these BDRs with vague or no details, but then they are using them against these students.

Another concern that we're seeing is misuse, this is an acknowledgment from a meeting that I had with CCSD police, that their team is being misused by a lot of our building administrators to almost bully them into writing citations for battery. "Battery" is the weaponized word that then results in a mandatory expulsion. As we know, in our district, we have data that proves there is an over-suspension and expulsion of Black and Brown children. Our CCSD police are being almost coerced into creating these citations to substantiate that. They have expressed concerns directly to me about that.

Outside of those concerns, I've also seen examples of retaliation against CCSD employees who are parents that advocated for some kind of disparity or discrepancy with their child. All of a sudden, that parent is under investigation and sometimes even fired.

I heard the board mentioned earlier that there is also a gross and alarming concern of lack of SO awareness throughout CCSD. They harass you almost when it's Valentine's Day and they want donations and telegrams and all the cute things, but they do not advertise at all or make it widely known about the SO, which again blocks an entire community from being able to have their voices heard.

In addition, the Cultural Inclusive Champions that every single school in CCSD has, none of their parents know about it, know what that acronym stands for, and, at a lot of meetings that involve cultural inclusivity, L-CIC folks are not even present.

These are just a summary of concerns I wanted to bring to the body.

Thank you.

**Appendix A, Item 5: ED GONZALES**

Thank you, Madame President, members of the board.

For the record, my name is Ed Gonzalez. I'm the vice chair of the Hickey Elementary School SOT team.

Before I comment on my written one, I do want to mention something from the previous speaker. One of the concerns we do have about school organizational teams is the effect of the lack of parent leaders and knowledge about them. Being in a school on the northeast side, at the beginning of the year, I literally had a table that said, "Join the PTO, join the SOT," knowing that nobody understood any of those acronyms and was just basically



calling into it.

One of the things, too, when you talk about the student code of conduct, in NRS, it does mention that school organizational teams should have some input into it. But this year, we actually received that information past the deadline we were supposed to submit it, so it was very unusual. The previous speaker is right about the fact that people, especially parents, do not know about school organizational teams and the roles that they have. But I actually came up here to thank the board members for coming for Reading Week. I think we had 1.5 people who read at Hickey. One of the reasons why we invite the State Board to it is that Miss Hickey was the first Latina on the State Board of Education. So, just as a courtesy, we invite all the State Board of Education members. The students really liked it because when you go.

I want to thank Dr. Braxton, President, Dr. Dockweiler, Vice President Hughes, for attending, along with Felicia G., back over there.

We actually explain what the State Board does that affects them, such as the standards they see on the wall. They did bring some suggestions like, you know, a non-homework policy or maybe mandatory all-day recess, that came up.

One of the things that we do with Reading Week is actually bring people into schools and highlight education. I don't invite the Golden Knights or the Raiders or things of that nature, though I know they would enjoy that as well, because we want to show them where they can aspire to. We actually had six judges come, which I appreciated. Though the questions from the kids were always interesting. I think one asked, "Do you put kids in jail?" And I give the judge credit, she was quick. She said, "No, I put them in prison." That class probably behaved really well the rest of the day.

But I do appreciate the fact that the board is willing to come in and read in classrooms and have that opportunity. I know that people forget about the State Board of Education when they think about things, but I can tell you the kids really enjoy it and ask questions about it.

Like I said, I always appreciate that, and you all will always be invited. I know Member Hudson, you always joke that you want to read, but you're actually teaching, so you give me some slack for that. I appreciate that, and one year we'll figure that out.

Other than that, I just want to thank everybody for coming. I really do appreciate it, and you'll all be invited next year as well, whether you can attend or not.

Thank you.