

**Statewide Council for the Coordination of the Regional Professional
Development Programs**
Proposal for the Use of Administrative Training Funds

Nevada Association of School Administrators (NASA)
Center for Educational Excellence VI (CEEI)

Presented by: Nevada Association of School Administrators (NASA)
Dr. Jeff Geihs, Executive Director, NASA
Dr. Greta Peay, Deputy Director, NASA

Organization Overview

The Nevada Association of School Administrators (NASA) is a professional organization that represents school administrators throughout the State of Nevada. Its primary function is to:

1. Promote legislation that improves education within the state.
2. Provide leadership that facilitates communication among administrators, component groups, and other organizations within the state.
3. Provide for professional collaboration by sponsoring and/or facilitating relevant professional conferences, publications, institutes, and workshops.
4. Serve as a unifying voice for school administrators in matters affecting education.
5. Provide direction and service for its members.
6. Promote a positive image of education to the public.

Beliefs

1. "Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other." John F. Kennedy
2. Strong leaders provide teachers with pathways to success.
3. Leaders are teachers and teachers are leaders.
4. Learning is life's work.
5. "The biggest way to impact an organization is to focus on leadership development. There is almost no limit to the potential of an organization that

recruits good people, raises them up as leaders, and continually develops them.”
John Maxwell

Vision

NASA is a premier professional development organization serving all educators in Nevada and beyond to learn and lead.

Mission

The mission is to provide all educators in Nevada and beyond with high quality, timely, critical, and empowering professional development designed to impact student outcomes, support leadership and instructional improvement, and provide services to support their work.

NASA’s Center for Educational Excellence Institute (CEEI) VI

With the approval of state funds, the Nevada Association of School Administrators (NASA) developed an institute within the organization dedicated solely to high-quality leadership development. The Center for Educational Excellence Institute (CEEI) represents a focus on excellent professional development for all stakeholders. Previous CEEI sessions have included strategists, facilitators and teacher leaders, coordinators, directors, site-level administrators, and central office administrators. CEEI Presenters are individuals who are national experts, Nevada Department of Education experts, NASA board members, and presenters who have relevant work experiences.

In CEEI III, IV, and V, the Nevada Department of Education team provided Social and Emotional Learning professional learning, which provided valuable relevant information to address successful student outcomes. Such critical information forms the backdrop of all learning.

Over the past year, student learning was provided primarily in a virtual format due to COVID-19. As a result, we recognize the impact that such learning has had on students as well as teachers and administrators. It is imperative to remain cognizant of the needs of students. As a result, the CEEI VI will not only address Social Emotional Learning and Academic Competency-Based Education but will include a content focus in the area of equity. The theme is titled, **Powerful Leadership Through Equitable Decision Making.**

The Nevada Department of Education (NDE) work is led by their five-year strategic improvement plan. The Statewide Plan for the Improvement of Pupils (STIP) focuses on closing opportunity gaps for students. One of the STIP priorities, which will be incorporated into the CEEI VI is equity. We must support an environment where each student is valued, respected, and have successful student outcomes regardless of age,

gender, socio-economic status, religion, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, ability, native language, national origin, or citizenship status.

The Nevada Department of Education (NDE) also continues its focus on Social, Emotional, and Academic Development (SEAD). The experts, at the State Department, through the CEEI, will integrate SEAD through a Student-Centered Competency-Based Education approach as a reminder of the need for equitable learning and decision-making to benefit all students.

The CEEI VI will commence on **Saturday, October 16, 2021, and conclude on Wednesday, January 26, 2022**. Participants will receive a total of six (6) credits during CEEI VI with the option to receive seven (8) credits. Due to the combination of Social Emotional Learning (SEL) along with Student-Centered Competency-Based leadership through equitable decision making, we are extending professional learning opportunities. The following workshops, at no additional cost, to participants as follows:

- Student-Centered Competency Based Learning (½ credit workshop)
- Mentoring for Leaders (½ credit workshop)
- Social and Emotional Competencies (1 credit workshop.)

All presentations will be provided virtually with sensitivity to accommodations required by participants. NASA has the capability of using closed captions, and the ability to record sessions for anyone needing such accommodations.

Scope of Work

This section includes the presenters and the objectives to be met through virtual presentations.

We believe it is best practice to engage both school and district administrators to serve as Session Leaders for participants. With the approval of grant requested funds, we expect to engage 13 Session Leaders. Session Leaders will be responsible for one to two sessions based on the allocated time for the presenters.

Session Leaders are responsible for collaborating with their designated presenter(s), attending their assigned session(s), monitoring assignments provided to their designated cohort, providing quality mentoring to participants to ensure assignments are understood, and guiding participants successful outcomes for all deliverable expectations.

To maintain consistency with Session Leaders and their cohorts, Mr. AJ Adams will provide a two (2) hour training session with Session Leaders prior to the beginning of the Institute Kick-off. Such training will provide an overview of expectations and successful outcomes for each participant.

Presenters are responsible for providing agenda(s), materials, deliverable assignments and intended outcomes.

The CEEI will have two participant cohorts. One will be for teachers and teacher leaders and the other for administrators. This decision was based on the feedback and comments from previous CEEI sessions.

The calendar is comprised of nineteen (19) sessions which is comprised sixty (60) hours of virtual learning and thirty (30) hours of deliverables. Assignments include quality time, with session leaders, along with ongoing activities, training and network opportunities remains the forefront of planning and implementation.

CEEI presenters will disseminate research-based knowledge related to effective educational leadership behaviors and skills. The Nevada Department of Education priorities will be integrated in various presentations.

1. **Anticipated Number of Participants:** 175
2. **Timeline:** Saturday, October 16, 2021- Wednesday, January 26, 2022.
3. **Total Sessions:** Nineteen (19) sessions for a total of sixty (60) hours. Three (4) hour sessions, and sixteen (3) hour sessions.
4. **Credits:** Six (6)
Sixty (60) hours of virtual learning with presenters and thirty (30) hours of deliverables, which includes independent project deliverables and time with Session Leaders for support, questions, and networking with colleagues.
5. **Total Deliverables:** Thirty (30) hours – Session Leaders will each have 30 minutes of collaboration time with their teacher and/or administrative cohort. The 30 minutes of time may be delivered whole group, two-way communication via, text messages, Google/Zoom meetings, and emails.
6. **Success measure outcomes:** Participants will complete virtual sessions and completion of deliverables in alignment with the Nevada Department of Education guidelines.

CEEI VI Session Presenters:

AJ Adams

Dr. Ken Bird

Jan Jones Blackhurst

Dr. Debbie Brocket

Dr. Marjorie Conner

Dr. Peter Gorman

Dr. Silvana Gorton

Burke Harr, Esq

Dr. Jesus Jara

Dr. Kristen McNeill

Kevin McPartlin

Dr. Zachary Robbins

Dr. Gloria M. Rodriguez

Dr. Anthony Rolle

Colin Seale

Dr. Jim Sutfin

***In the event of unforeseen circumstances, we respectfully reserve the right to identify an equitable alternate presenter.**

**Nevada Association of School Administrators (NASA)
Center for Educational Excellence (CEEI) VI
Powerful Leadership Through Equitable Decision-Making
Saturday, October 16, 2021, - Wednesday, January 26, 2022**

Saturday, October 16, 2021

8:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.

Presenters

AJ Adams President, NASA

Dr. Jeff Geihs, Executive Director, NASA

Dr. Jesus Jara, Superintendent, Clark County School District

Dr. Kristen McNeal, Superintendent, Washoe County School District

Dr. Peter Gorman, Dr. Pete Gorman, President and Chief Executive Officer of Peter Gorman Leadership Associates LLC

Dr. Greta Peay, Deputy Director, NASA

Tuesday, October 19, 21, and 26, 2021

4:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

Dr. Peter Gorman

“Aligned Systems” – 3 Sessions

Student achievement at scale focused on offering equitable opportunities for all students. Sessions will utilize presentations, videos, large and small group discussions, readings, and activities. Dr. Gorman will lead participants through how the highest functioning teams have aligned their beliefs, vision, mission, theory of action, policies, strategic plan, budget, accountability system and evaluation system in a climate of psychological safety and felt accountability to achieve results for all students in an equitable fashion.

Thursday, October 28, 2021

4:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

AJ Adams, President, NASA

“Exploring the Foundations of Successful Mentoring”

In this workshop, CEEI participants will explore theoretical foundations of adult development and learning as it pertains to the mentorship process. Participants will learn various practical techniques and strategies to use as an educator, aspiring leader, and leader. Participants will also explore what traits and characteristics they value in a mentor for themselves. NASA, through the CEEI, has created this professional learning opportunity for all, to not only strengthen their own leadership skills in order to provide

support and guidance to the next generation of leaders, but to positively impact our schools and communities to improve student outcomes.

Tuesday, November 2, and 19, 2021

4:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

Jan Jones Blackhurst (1 Session)

Debbie Brockett (2 Sessions)

Understanding the Barriers and Bias of Women in Leadership

More women are entering the realm of key leaders in education and the private sector. This session will dive into some of the identified barriers and biases women often face when moving through the ranks of leadership. This session will challenge both men and women participants to identify and hinge the systematic barriers that exist which makes it less likely for women to successfully enter the leadership ranks. Participants will engage in activities which include podcast, articles, case studies, and more.

Thursday, November 4, 2021, and January 12, 2022

4:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

Dr. Silvana Gorton, Dr. Debb Oliver, Marie DuFresne

“Leadership for Social Emotional and Academic Development and Student-Centered Competency Based Learning- Nevada’s Need for Social Emotional and Academic Development (SEAD)”

Participants will articulate the 5 Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Nevada (CASEL) competencies from the school leader perspective, explore the SEL impact on students and adults, school climate, safety, and workforce development.

Wednesday, November 10, 2021

4:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

Dr. Marjorie Conner

“The Importance of Trust: A Great Force Multiplier”

Why is Trust important and for that matter, what is Trust? This session will discuss the important traits of trust and the economy of trust. Further, the discussion will take us into self-trust, relationship trust, organizational trust, market trust, and societal trust and how to build strong trust-based relationships in the workplace. Trust includes pillars that support the work, and we will explore what happens if those pillars erode. The purpose of this session is to explore the notion that trust changes everything. We will use The Speed of Trust by Stephen M.R. Covey as the basis on some of our discussion points and build upon the work of Wayne Hoy, Megan Tschannen-Moran and others who continue to proclaim that trust is the foundation of all success.

Participants will learn to define and determine the true meaning of trust, discuss the importance of trust in the workplace, explore the economy of trust—why trust is a force multiplier, explore the waves of trust (self-trust, relationship trust, organizational trust, market trust, societal trust), determine behaviors that build trust, examine the pillars of trust (benevolence, reliability, competence, honesty, openness), outline a plan for improving trust in your workplace.

Saturday, November 13, 2021

8:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

Dr. Zachary Robbins
“Engineering School Climate”

Race and ethnicity are assets that contribute to the marketplace of ideas in schools. Diversity makes learning environments rich with possibilities. Rebuffing diversity often strains relationships, damages school climate, and creates unnecessary power struggles between students and an overwhelmingly White and female teaching workforce. This power struggle too often results in out-of-school consequences for students of color. Suspensions and expulsions are poor solutions to this puzzle. Out-of-school behavior consequences leave students out of school, disconnected from academic and emotional supports, and with gaps in their learning. Session participants will learn how to use Restorative Justice to respond to misbehavior and establish expectations that embrace diversity as an asset.

Teachers will learn how the following learning outcomes impact them in the classroom. Site leaders will learn how to supervise in ways to reach these outcomes. District leaders will learn how to support site leaders to make their campuses more restorative and responsive to diverse students and staff.

Session participants will learn how to engineer a school climate that emphasizes safety, belonging, and acceptance of diversity and diverse ideas, which functions as a protective factor against disruptive behavior, how to run restorative justice circles and the restorative justice tribunal, how to coordinate wrap-around support services for students in restorative justice programming that need tier-three emotional or behavioral supports, how implicit biases sometimes influence educators to refer students for disciplinary consequences in disproportionate, culturally insensitive ways. Participants will also learn how to reverse this trend.

Wednesday, November 17, 2021

4:30 a.m.-7:30 p.m.

Dr. Anthony Rolle, Drs. Rodriguez, and Alexander
Co-Presenters
“The Three Faces of Education Finance - Applying Principles of Equity, Efficiency, Adequacy to School Finance and Budgeting”

Education finance researchers tend to organize their thoughts on important issues by considering one of three foundational perspectives: (a) equity, (b) efficiency, and (c)

adequacy. Developing analytical paradigms within each of these pillars of education finance, and the interactions between combinations of them, allows researchers and policymakers to understand and examine education finance issues more thoroughly. In particular,

* When utilizing concepts of equity as a primary analytical paradigm, researchers are concerned with fairness in the generation, exchange, and distribution of human and financial resources, educational services, and educational outcomes.

* When utilizing concepts of efficiency as a primary analytical paradigm, researchers are concerned with the relation between levels of financial inputs and educational outcomes.

* When utilizing concepts of adequacy as a primary analytical paradigm, researchers are concerned with ensuring that students are provided ample resources in the pursuit of "high minimum" educational outcomes.

Drs. Rodriguez, Rolle, and Alexander will base their work within the context of the three pillars and present applied exemplars for their utilization. Each presentation will leave participants with important information and insightful questions about both the usage and efficacy of education finance principles in their daily work.

Saturday, November 20, 2021

8:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.

Colin Seale

“Beyond Inclusiveness: Implementing Culturally Responsive Pedagogy as an Accelerator for Real Learning Outcomes”

Education equity cannot just be about closing achievement gaps. It must be about shattering achievement ceilings. But when it comes to students of color living in poverty, we often fail to recognize, nurture, and unleash the brilliance they bring to our classrooms. Most attempts to shift towards culturally responsive pedagogy result in important, yet surface-level shifts such as selecting books and historical figures to study who reflect students’ identity and experiences. This workshop goes beyond the surface with powerful, but practical low-floor, high-ceiling, culturally responsive instructional strategies, discussion structures, test prep strategies, approaches to classroom management that maximize student voice and purposefully shift power to students and move past the myth of meritocracy and toward the “hidden” curriculum of success (networking, navigating systems, storytelling etc.).

Wednesday, December 1, 2021, and January 22, 2022

4:30 p.m. -7:30 p.m.

Dr. Ken Bird, Burke Harr, and Jim Sutfin

“Powerful Leadership Through Equitable DecisionMaking”

Public-private partnerships: Making a difference through collaboration and shared responsibility will provide participants insights into how leveraging public/private partnerships can be a powerful tool in improving educational opportunities, workforce development and community betterment. The importance of Governance, public/private funding, stakeholder involvement and communication will be discussed in this session. Participants will be provided examples of Public/Private partnerships that have led to positive and meaningful changes.

Wednesday, December 8, 2021

4:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

Colin Seale

“Tangible Equity: An Instructional Framework for Identity, Excellence, and Leadership in and Beyond the Classroom”

School systems have formed their equity committees, written their equity plans, trained educators in implicit bias workshops, and conducted lots of book studies. But what does educational equity look like on Tuesday morning for a 4th grade general education teacher? For HS chemistry teachers? How can educators prioritize the need to think with an equity lens with the pressures of ensuring academic success? Why do some educators deeply believe in the promise of educational equity still struggle with inequitable academic and disciplinary outcomes in their own classrooms?

Wednesday, January 5, 2022

4:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

Kevin McPartlin

“Educational Leadership in Action”

At the conclusion of this session, participants will understand the thought process a school leader must employ when challenges arise to bring about positive outcomes; understand the internal communication process (with staff, central office) a school leader must employ when challenges arise that may impact a school; understand the external communication process (with students, parents, community) a school leader must employ when challenges arise that may impact a school; understand the importance and methods to maintain a positive school climate while handling challenges; understand resources and support available to school leaders while addressing challenges; understand the importance of truly knowing a school community (makeup, history, pockets of leadership) to move a school through challenges; understand the importance of documentation when challenges arise; understand how to handle the public relations concerns handling unexpected high profile challenges; reflect on their own knowledge about their own school community; reflect on their own support systems and relationships with various central office personnel; evaluate the level of equity-based decision making occurring at their own school site; evaluate their own level of preparedness to handle high profile challenges.

Wednesday, January 12, 2022

4:30 p.m.- 5:30 p.m.

Dr. Johnathan Moore

Alberto Quintero

“Advancing Equity through the Sharing of Power”

Presenters discuss ways in which individuals and organizations can advance equity through a focus on vision, goals, priorities and support parents and families.

Objectives: Participants will learn strategies for advancing equity and sharing power. Participants will reflect on ways in which they can advance equity and share power within their context.

5:30 p.m.- 7:30 p.m. Discussion and Reflection Session

Wednesday, January 19, 2022

4:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m.

Debbie Brockett

“Understanding the Barriers and Bias of Women in Leadership Part II”

This session will dive into the barriers and biases women often face when moving through the ranks of leadership, helping both male and female participants understand how such traits impact leadership. This session will challenge both men and women to identify and change the systematic barriers which may exist that make it less likely for women to aspire to become leaders.

Saturday, January 22, 2022

8:00 a.m.-11:00 a.m.

Dr. Ken Bird

Burke Harr

Dr. Jim Sutfin

“Public-Private Partnerships: Making a Difference Through Collaboration and Shared Responsibility Part II”

This session will provide participants insights into how leveraging public/private partnerships can be a powerful tool in improving educational opportunities, workforce development and community betterment. The importance of Governance, public/private funding, stakeholder involvement and communication will all be discussed in this session.

Tuesday, January 25, 2022

4:30 p.m.- 7:30 p.m.

Dr. Summer Stephens
"Competency- Based Learning"

Dr. Stephens will share lessons learned on the competency-based learning journey as it applies to the COVID-19 climate. Dr. Stephens is active in promoting excellence and innovation throughout Churchill County School District. Dr. Stephens has successfully implemented systems of blended and online learning, voice and choice self-paced learning, project- based learning and design thinking. At the state and national level, she is a strong advocate, working with legislatures to ensure equitable funding and opportunities for learners. Her involvement at the city and county level creates a great connection between school, home, and community.

Wednesday, January 26, 2022

5:00 p.m.- 6:00 p.m.

Dr. Jeffrey Geihs
Final Reflections

Presenter Biographies:



AJ Adams, Principal, Sunrise Mountain High School, Las Vegas, Nevada

For nearly 25 years, AJ Adams has dedicated his life to serving the nation's 5th largest school district, the Clark County School District. Throughout his career, he has been afforded a multitude of opportunities including teaching special education, serving as a K-12 Principal, Associate Superintendent, and lobbying Legislators as an education advocate.

As the current President of NASA, AJ has experience working with the community, local government municipalities, and state legislators to develop meaningful partnerships in order to provide cutting edge leadership development integrated with his passion of coaching and mentoring leaders. AJ is a graduate of the Harvard Business School Public Education Leadership Program, an alumnus of the PEF Executive Leadership Academy, an alumni of NASA's CEEI, and most recently he obtained a Certificate in Educational Finance through Georgetown University and is a Certified Executive MindpowerCoach. Additionally, he is a Nationally Certified NAESP Principal Mentor and serves on the CCASAPE Board. Currently, he is the instructional leader of a large, urban high school in Las Vegas, and he has two children of his own who both attend schools in Clark County



Dr. Nicola Alexander, Professor; Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education, Diversity, and International Initiatives, University of Minnesota

Dr. Alexander is a faculty member in the Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development. She received her doctorate in public administration with a concentration in public finance from SUNY Albany. Her research interests include policy, equity, accountability, the economics of education, and school finance. She is also the immediate past president of the National Education Finance Academy and an associate editor of the *Journal of Research on Leadership Education*.

As associate dean, she is responsible for undergraduate education, student services, international initiatives, and the TRIO programs including Student Support Services, McNair, and Upward Bound. She will also provide leadership to the Common Ground Consortium and the CEHD First Year Experience program.



Dr. Ken Bird, President and CEO, Avenue Scholars Foundation, Omaha, Nebraska

Dr. Ken Bird is the President/CEO of Avenue Scholars Foundation and a former school Superintendent. The Bright Futures Foundation (renamed Avenue Scholars Foundation in September 2010) was organized in January 2008 with a pledge to ensure careers for students of hope and need through education and supportive relationships. Chaired by Omaha philanthropist Walter Scott, the Board of Directors hired Dr. Ken Bird, former Westside Community Schools Superintendent, as the Chief Executive Officer. Dr. Bird began his work in June 2008. The Avenue Scholars program is designed to provide intrusive support for students of hope and need through high school, college, and into the workforce. Starting in the fall of 2009, Avenue Scholars began serving 174 students in three area high schools and

Metro Community College. Avenue Scholars is currently serving approximately 475 students in seven Omaha area high schools, Metro Community College, and the University of Nebraska at Omaha. Dr. Bird is well versed in public private school partnerships and shares his expertise with others in order to benefit students.



Jan Jones Blackhurst

Executive Director, UNLV Black Fire Leadership Initiative

Caesars Entertainment Board of Directors

Chief Executive in Residence, UNLV International Gaming Institute, Las Vegas, Nevada

Jan Jones Blackhurst is a long-time political and business leader who has left an indelible imprint on the lives of millions of people. In 1991, Jan broke the glass ceiling as Las Vegas' first female mayor. Under Jan's leadership the city experienced tremendous growth, making her one of the Las Vegas' most popular mayors. She then joined Caesars Entertainment, where she grew the industry's first Responsible Gaming practices to include an ambassador model for the gaming industry and the first industry code of commitment. Jan is also known and respected for her efforts to create a diverse and inclusive workplace, advancing environmental stewardship, advocating for important social issues, and giving millions of dollars to individuals, families, and communities in need. She speaks extensively at universities nationwide and helped establish the International Gaming Institution Center of Excellence at the University of Nevada Las Vegas. In 2019, Jan joined Caesars Entertainment's Board of Directors, after leading the company's Corporate Social Responsibility and public policy efforts for two decades. She also became Chief Executive in Residence at the UNLV International Gaming Institute, where she was a popular faculty member and key player in the "Expanding the Leader verse" initiative. She became Executive Director, UNLV Black Fire Leadership Initiative January 2021. •

Under Jan's leadership, employee diversity increased, with 41 percent of management positions held by women and 57 percent of employees from diverse backgrounds • Employee engagement hit a high, driven by a volunteer program in which employees donate more than 400,000 hours per year to both company and community causes.

Additionally, she serves on several boards as chairwoman, including the Nevada Resort Association and Las Vegas Stadium Authority; she is also a member of the Women's Leadership Board at the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. She has received many awards and accolades, including: the Americanism Award from the Antidefamation League (ADL); the Woman of Diversity Award for "100 Years of Influence - Women Shaping the First 100 Years of Las Vegas"; Outstanding Service in a Land based Industry from Totally Gaming; and PR News CSR Professional of the Year. The Las Vegas Business Press also named her one of its "Women Who Mean Business." Jan has been honored by the American Diabetes Association and the "I Have a Dream" Foundation and was named Humanitarian of the Year in 1998 by the Muscular Dystrophy Association. In 2014, she was one of the first women to be inducted into the American Gaming Association (AGA) Gaming Hall of Fame. Most recently, she earned the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Latin Chamber of Commerce, the Dom Pérignon Award of Excellence from UNLVino, the Diversity Hero Award from PR Week and was honored by the ACLU for Community Equality. Jan Jones Blackhurst holds a bachelor's degree in English from Stanford University and attended the University of Southern California's School of Food Marketing Management. Jan is most proud to have an elementary school named in her honor.



Dr. Debbie Brockett, Superintendent, McMinnville School District, McMinnville, Oregon

Debbie Brockett was named superintendent of the McMinnville School District in March 2021. She comes to the district from Clark County School District in Nevada, where she most recently served as a Region Superintendent, overseeing 108 PK-12 schools, including two Career and Technical Academies, a virtual learning academy, and several magnet schools. She began her career in Clark County School District, where she was a special education teacher and coach. She then moved into administration and served as a dean of students, assistant principal, and principal. As the principal of Las Vegas High School, she improved the Advanced Placement course offerings, increased the career and technical pathways, and consistently increased the graduation rate for all student groups. In 2016, she was chosen to receive the Heart of Education Award for Innovation in Schools. Ms. Brockett has been active in improving student achievement at the school, district, and state level and served on various boards and associations. She also extends her passion for teaching to National University where she is an adjunct professor in the school leadership and special education departments.



Dr. Marjorie Conner

Dr. Marjorie Conner, President and Chief Executive Officer of MMC Consulting, Inc., has been recognized as an education leader in Nevada for over 40 years. She has served as a teacher, curriculum writer and professional development specialist; assistant principal; principal; Area Superintendent; and Assistant Region Superintendent in Clark County School District. She consults in the areas of leadership, school improvement, and building relationships with the Nevada State Department of Education, with school districts including CCSD, RPDP, and with individual school leaders.

Her career began as a teacher in New Raymer, Colorado, and in Clark County, Nevada. She served CCSD as an administrator until 2003. Under her leadership as an Assistant Region Superintendent, the PLC process was brought to the most at-risk schools to improve collaboration, data usage, and a means to improve student outcomes. She received her doctorate in Educational Leadership from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and has taught at Nova University, University of Phoenix, and UNLV. She has worked in CCSD's central office on leadership improvement, school improvement, and leadership development with the Academic Unit and Turnaround Zone. She recently served as the Deputy Executive Director of the Nevada Association of School Administrators serving the state of Nevada. Dr. Conner is currently supporting schools with new administrators in systems alignment for improved student outcomes.



Marie DuFresne, M.A. Nevada Department of Education

Marie DuFresne is on a mission to make sure that every student in Nevada is not only proficient, but experts in social emotional knowledge, skills, and abilities. Licensed and trained as a K-12 Professional

School Counselor, Marie has over sixteen years of experience in the Nevada education system. She currently works for the Nevada Department of Education and serves as the Social Emotional Academic Development program professional for the Office for a Safe and Respectful Learning Environment. She was awarded Nevada School Counselor of the Year in 2013 and was also a semi-finalist for the 2013 American School Counselor Association (ASCA) Counselor of the Year. Marie received her Master of Arts degree in Educational Counseling from the University of Phoenix and Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Nevada, Reno. Although she was not born in Nevada, Marie considers herself a native Nevadan as she has spent most of her life in this spectacular state. She is also a certified instructor for Youth and Adult Mental Health First Aid and Nevada Hunter Education.



Dr. Pete Gorman, President and Chief Executive Officer of Peter Gorman Leadership Associates LLC, Charlotte, North Carolina

Dr. Peter Gorman is Superintendent in residence with the District Administration Leadership Institute with more than 30 years of experience in education and business. He is also Chief in residence with Chiefs for Change guiding the Future Chiefs program working to build a pipeline of “Future Chiefs” for states and districts. He is the author of the book “Leading a School District Requires Clarity, Contact, and Candor. An Aligned System to Increase Student Achievement at Scale” and is contributing editor of “Board & Administrator” writing the lead column monthly.

Dr. Gorman’s career began as a second-grade teacher in Orlando, Florida. He worked as a teacher, principal, and district-level administrator in Orange, Seminole and Osceola counties in Florida before becoming superintendent of schools in Tustin, California. In 2006, Dr. Gorman became superintendent of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools in North Carolina. Under his leadership, the district won the 2011 Broad Prize in Urban Education, which recognizes increases in student achievement and closing of achievement gaps. Twenty members of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Leadership Team during his tenure have been appointed as superintendents nationally.



Silvana Gorton, PhD, Nevada Department of Education

Dr. Silvana Gorton oversees Title II, Part A for the State of Nevada. Silvana provides support and technical assistance to district leaders in aligning district activities and initiatives to state and district priorities, and to three broad goals of Title IIA: effective, experienced, and prepared educators. Silvana's expertise includes MTSS, social emotional and academic development (SEAD), and the integration of SEAD competencies in effective instructional practices. Silvana serves as a thought-partner and collaborative ally to school leaders in creating conditions across every learning context that increases educator capacity, effectiveness, and leadership, and promotes equitable outcomes for all students.



Burke Harr, Esq., Omaha Nebraska

Harr grew up in Omaha. He received his Bachelors in Political Science in 1994 at the University of St. Thomas in Minneapolis, Minnesota. He continued his education at the University of Notre Dame School of Law receiving his J.D. in 1998. Following graduation, Harr returned to Nebraska to clerk for the Nebraska Court of Appeals for one year before serving as a Douglas County prosecutor.

Harr's current practice focuses on Public-Private partnerships with organizations, institutions, and governmental bodies. His clients' concerns are in the arena of juvenile justice, criminal justice, housing, youth violence, affordable housing, education, work force development, tax policy, and health care.

Harr currently works at Houghton Bradford Whitted. Harr resides in Omaha with his wife, Jennifer, an elementary school principal, and three children, Rita, 12, Gussie 11, and Ambrose 6.

Harr served in the Jesuit Volunteer Corps in San Francisco, CA. He has served on the Project Harmony Board, Ak-Sar-Ben Floor Committee, and Creighton Hilltopper Board. He currently serves on the boards of the Big Garden Board, a community garden organization, Museum of Nebraska Art, and is chair of the board for GESU, a nonprofit that builds homes in high poverty neighborhoods.



Dr. Jesus F. Jara, Superintendent, Clark County School District, Las Vegas, Nevada

Knows our kids only have one shot at school. That is what drives him to help make the Clark County School District (CCSD) the number one choice for students and their families.

Dr. Jara has a unique perspective after moving to Miami from Venezuela as an English- Language Learner. Teachers invested in him as a child, and Dr. Jara has set a priority of ensuring equity and access for our historically underserved and under-resourced students.

Dr. Jara has more than 20 years of experience serving public school students, including serving as the deputy superintendent for Orange County Public Schools in Florida, the superintendent and chief operations officer in Monroe County Public Schools (Florida), as executive director of the College Board's Florida Partnership, and as an assistant principal and principal in Springfield, Mass. He began his career in Miami-Dade County Public Schools, where he was a bilingual biology teacher and coach.

He received his Doctorate in Education, Educational Policy, Leadership, and Administration from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. Dr. Jara is married and has three children who thrived in public schools.



Dr. Kristen McNeill

Dr. Kristen McNeill is a native Nevadan who moved to the Reno-Sparks area in 1996. She has worked for

more than two decades in public education with more than 26 years with Washoe County School Dis

(WCSD). She began her career with WCSD teaching grades 2 through 6, then served as the principal of Lois Allen Elementary School and later at Marvin Moss Elementary School.

Dr. McNeill became the WCSD Director of State and Federal Programs/K-16 Initiatives in 2008, then was named Chief Strategies Officer in 2010. She assumed the duties of Chief of Staff for the Washoe County School District in 2012 and served as Interim Superintendent in the summer of 2012.

In September 2015, Dr. McNeill was appointed to the Deputy Superintendent position for WCSD. In that role, she oversaw the areas of Office of School Leadership, Office of Academics, and the Strategies Office. In July 2019, Dr. McNeill was appointed by the Board of Trustees to serve as Interim Superintendent. She was appointed to the position of Superintendent of Schools for the Washoe County School District in April 2020.

Dr. McNeill serves on several non-profit boards including Truckee Meadows Healthy Communities, Communities in Schools J4NG, and EDAWN. Throughout her career she has contributed to various District, state, and national committees on educational issues. As a representative of WCSD, she has supported efforts in the Nevada State Legislature related to important education matters for the children of Washoe County and the state of Nevada.

While Dr. McNeill is a strong supporter of public education in all areas, she has maintained a concerted focus on students in poverty, homelessness, and early childhood education.

Dr. McNeill holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Hotel Administration and a master's degree in Instructional and Curricular Studies from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Dr. McNeill received her educational leadership credential as well as her doctorate in educational leadership at the University of Nevada, Reno.



Kevin McPartlin, Principal, Arbor View High School, Las Vegas, Nevada

Originally from Detroit (MI), Kevin McPartlin moved to Nevada in 1997 and began his career teaching all levels of math at Las Vegas High School in east Las Vegas. During his twenty-five years in education, he has had the privilege of working with students and communities in every corner of the Las Vegas valley. Now, in his sixteenth year as a principal, he is the longest serving high school principal in the 5th largest school district in the country.

In 2011, McPartlin was named principal at Arbor View High School in northwest Las Vegas. Kevin focuses on achievement gaps between subgroups and promoting initiatives related to inclusion and equity for all students. As part of these efforts, McPartlin implemented an Advisory Program to promote positive relationships, personal wellness, and life skills. He removed structures and processes that potentially hindered students from accessing higher level courses and programming. Throughout his tenure at Arbor View, achievement gaps have been drastically reduced and graduation rates have increased for all student subgroups. Arbor View was recognized in 2013, and again in 2016, as having the highest graduation rate of any comprehensive high school in Las Vegas.

Having established himself as a proven educational leader, McPartlin has presented at numerous educational symposiums, including statewide and national conferences in Las Vegas, Reno, Lake Tahoe, San Diego, Vancouver (WA), and Washington D.C. His presentation topics have included Ninth Grade Academies, Advisory Periods, and Managing School Chang



Dr. Zachary Robbins, Principal, Cheyenne High School, Las Vegas, Nevada

Dr. Zachary Scott Robbins is a school leader and president of the company Restorative Justice Solutions. He has turned around several secondary schools, and he trains school leaders, teachers, and private sector employees about how to launch restorative justice programs. Routledge Education Press will publish his book about restorative practices in early 2021. Zac was educated at Howard University in Washington, DC, and he earned his Ph.D. in Education Administration at the Boston College Lynch School of Education. You can find Dr. Robbins on Twitter at DrZacRobbins and online at www.getrestorativejustice.com.

Dr. Robbins is the principal of Cheyenne High School in the Clark County School District (CCSD). He piloted, and demonstrated, for colleagues, the first Restorative Justice program in CCSD. A track record of effective school leadership earned Cheyenne High School as an “Autonomous Designation” by the Nevada Department of Education (Nevada Senate Bill 92), providing discretion in hiring, curriculum, and instructional programs independent of the local school district.



Dr. Gloria M. Rodriguez, Professor, UC Davis School of Education

Gloria M. Rodriguez’s current research explores notions of educational investment that reflect efforts to build upon community strengths in order to address community needs within and beyond educational settings. Dr. Rodriguez also engages in research that focuses on the political economic conditions and educational trajectories of Chicana/o-Latina/o communities, other communities of color, and low-income populations in the U.S.

Current projects include Leadership for Real Impact in K-12 schools and Community Colleges; Project EXCEL (Examining College Choice, Enrollment & Linkages). Dr. Rodriguez’s research interests include, but not limited to school finance/resource allocation and educational leadership from a critical, social justice perspective, understanding notions of educational investment that reflect efforts to build upon community strengths in order to address community needs within and beyond educational settings.



Dr. Anthony Rolle, Dean, University of Florida, College of Education

R. Anthony Rolle, PhD, is Dean of the University of South Florida (USF) College of Education. An experienced leader with more than two decades of professional service to the field of education, Dr. Rolle has established a long-standing commitment to supporting student access for student academic success, faculty excellence in research and instruction, and increasing community engagement.

As Dean of the USF College of Education, Dr. Rolle is responsible for leading the college's 2,200 students and 130 faculty members who are spread across USF's three campuses. He also serves as a professor in the College of Education's Department of Leadership, Policy, and Lifelong Learning.

A former professor and department chair at USF, Dr. Rolle returned to the College of Education after serving as dean of the Alan Shawn Feinstein College of Education & Professional Studies at the University of Rhode Island for four years. Prior to his tenure at the University of Rhode Island, Rolle also held leadership positions at the University of Houston and Texas A&M University.

Dr. Rolle is a nationally recognized scholar with expertise in K-12 education finance and economic policy. He has developed models to measure effectiveness and efficiency in public school systems, managed national and internationally recognized research projects for government and nonprofit organizations, increased endowed student scholarships, enhanced community partnerships, and supported faculty excellence in research and teaching on an international scale.

Dr. Rolle's past professional service includes serving as President of the **National Education Finance Academy** and as a Distinguished Research Fellow at the Shanghai Academy of Education Sciences. He serves on editorial and advisory boards for a number of national education associations and is a research fellow for the **National Education Policy Center's** Education and Public Interest Center and Education Policy Research Unit.



Mr. Colin Seale, Founder and CEO, thinkLaw, Las Vegas, Nevada

Colin Seale Founder and CEO of thinkLaw Tackling inequity hands-on has always been personal to Colin, because the amazing educational opportunities he received in gifted and talented courses and an exclusive specialized high school despite his underprivileged background growing up in Brooklyn, NY made him an exception to a painfully unjust rule. So whether Colin was teaching middle and high school math in Washington, D.C. and Las Vegas, NV, applying his computer science degree and Master's in Public Administration to fight for child safety at Nevada's largest child welfare agency, or practicing as a business attorney at one of Las Vegas' top law firms while representing children in foster care, Colin has always dreamed of a world where stories like his were no longer the exception, but instead, all students had an equal shot at being exceptional. Colin created thinkLaw to give all students access to the type of game-changing critical thinking education they need to not only fully understand the way the world is, but to question it and imagine the way the world ought to be. When he is not serving as the world's greatest critical thinking evangelist, Colin proudly serves as the world's greatest entertainer for his two little kiddos. His new book *Thinking Like a Lawyer: A Framework for Teaching Critical Thinking to All Students* is out April 2020.



Dr. Summer Stephens, Superintendent, Churchill County School District, Fallon, Nevada

Dr. Stephens is active in promoting excellence and innovation throughout Churchill County School District. With a passion for personalized learning, Dr. Stephens has successfully implemented systems of blended and online learning, choice and choice, self-paced learning, project-based learning, and design thinking. At the state and national level, she is a strong advocate, working with legislatures to ensure equitable funding and opportunities for learners. Here involvement at the city and county level creates a great connection between school, home, and community.

Dr. Stephens believes Competency-based education is based on the simple premise of more student choice and student voice. Students should have more choice in what they study, and more voice in how they demonstrate their learning.



Jim Sutfin, Ed.D., Superintendent, Millard Public Schools, Omaha, Nebraska

Dr. Jim Sutfin stepped into the role of superintendent for Millard Public Schools in fall of 2014. Currently he serves as the leader of a district of 35 schools with 24,000 students and more than 3,000 teachers and staff members. Previously, he served as the Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources. Along with his time in the central office, he has also filled the roles of principal, assistant principal, science department head and science teacher. He began his teaching career in Bellevue in 1989 and has been with Millard since 1995.

In 2016 he was named a Superintendent to Watch by the National School Public Relations Association and in 2020 he was named the Nebraska Superintendent of the Year.

Dr. Sutfin has made many presentations to educational, civic, and business groups. He is active in many organizations and serves on a number of boards including the Omaha Chamber of Commerce, MOEC Executive Task Force, Foundation for Millard Public Schools, and the GOALS Committee.

Dr. Sutfin's leadership has focused on finding wide ranging solutions to significant school and community challenges. He has led the successful development and implementation of the strategic plan. He led a successful tax levy override campaign in the fall of 2017 with nearly 63% voter approval. Despite significant budget constraints, Dr. Sutfin led the successful implementation of a 1:1 learning initiative that spans grades 6-12. Dr. Sutfin implemented the first Early College Program in Nebraska where high school students can earn their high school diploma and associate of arts degree simultaneously.

Dr. Sutfin has served as a consultant to other districts in the areas of strategic planning, recruitment and hiring practices, leadership development and succession planning, social media/communication, digital learning, and crisis management.

