

**NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NEVADA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETING OF THE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION WORKGROUP
AUGUST 20, 2020
2:00 P.M.**

Meeting Location

Due to the circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the State Board of Education met via videoconference. In accordance with Governor Sisolak's State of Emergency Directive 006, Section 1, no physical location was designated for this meeting. The meeting was livestreamed on the Nevada Department of Education's (NDE) website.

SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING

WORKGROUP MEMBERS PRESENT

Via Videoconference

Alex Gallegos
Tamara Hudson
Cathy McAdoo
Felicia Ortiz
Wayne Workman
Elaine Wynn

DEPARTMENT STAFF PRESENT

Jhone Ebert, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Felicia Gonzales, Deputy Superintendent of Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement
Heidi Haartz, Deputy Superintendent of Business and Support Services
Dr. Jonathan Moore, Deputy Superintendent of Student Achievement
Dave Brancamp, Director of Standards and Instructional Support
Dr. Stacey Joyner, Education Programs Supervisor
Emily Champlin, Education Programs Professional
Fredina Drye-Romero, Education Programs Professional
Alberto Quintero, Education Programs Professional

LEGAL STAFF PRESENT

Via Videoconference

David Gardner, Deputy Attorney General

PRESENTERS IN ATTENDANCE

Stacey Montooth, Executive Director, Nevada Indian Commission
Gerald Hunter, Native Youth Community Project College and Career Coach, Paiute River Tribe

AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE

Via Livestream

1: CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL

Meeting called to order at 2:01 P.M. by President Elaine Wynn. Quorum was established.

2: PUBLIC COMMENT #1

No public comment.

3: APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 29, 2020 DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION WORKGROUP MINUTES

Member Cathy McAdoo moved to approve the minutes of the June 29, 2020 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Workgroup meeting. Member Tamara Hudson seconded. Motion passed.

4: PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Wynn thanked Members Alex Gallegos and Wayne Workman for joining the Workgroup. President Wynn passed leadership of the Workgroup to Member Tamara Hudson. At the first meeting of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Workgroup, they focused on the issues of equity and justice as it relates to the digital divide in Nevada. President Wynn and the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) have worked with the Governor's COVID-19 Taskforce and other community partners to address the digital divide, including the launch of ConnectingKidsNV, an effort to provide students with broadband and devices.

5: INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION REGARDING THE STATUS OF THE DIGITAL DIVIDE IN NEVADA

Superintendent Ebert presented an Update regarding efforts to close the digital divide in Nevada. The Nevada Department of Education (NDE or Department) has been working with Brian Mitchell, the Director of the Governor's Office of Science, Innovation & Technology (OSIT), the COVID-19 Taskforce, and President Wynn to meet the need of every child and family in the State, with data points specific to accessibility to broadband and devices being tracked by individual student.

Director Mitchell has worked with the Chief Information Officers of the 17 school districts as well as the State Public Charter School Authority. OSIT has also facilitated the disbursement of 18,064 hotspots as part of the T-Mobile settlement. ConnectingKidsNV.org emphasizes the push for connectivity in Clark County, however it is a statewide effort to connect all children. In addition, the COVID-19 Task Force launched the Family Support Center, which assists families in attaining devices and gaining connectivity; their phone number is 888-616-2476. The call center is staffed Monday-Saturday, 7 A.M. to 6 P.M. The support center is also reaching out to community centers and organizations to ensure that they spread the word regarding accessibility options and opportunities.

At the direction of the Workgroup, the Department drafted letters regarding broadband connectivity and devices be sent to Nevada's federal representatives as well as the State legislature. The State Board of Education approved the letters at their August meeting. Assembly Bill (AB) 3, which allocated \$50 million through the federal CARES Act, can be used to support funding for broadband and devices. The application for AB 3 funds was released on August 6, and applications have already been submitted by five districts and funding has been disbursed accordingly. AB 3 funding was allocated per-pupil and prioritized elementary school students who need assistance with reading, English learners, students eligible for free-or-reduced-price-lunch, students performing at or below the 25th percentile, and students attending schools performing in the bottom 10 percent are prioritized.

Superintendent Ebert reflected that a fire was lit by the Workgroup and community to come together and provide connectivity and devices to every student and family, and she was proud to work with such dedicated community partners, including OSIT, the COVID-19 Taskforce, Kirsten Searer, President of the Public Education Foundation, Tami Hance, President and CEO for Communities in Schools, and Punam Mathur, Executive Director of the Elaine P. Wynn & Family Foundation.

President Wynn also recognized Member Felicia Ortiz for outreach to the Latinx community. Member Ortiz worked to match donors of devices in the community to families on the Clark County School District Padres y Madres/Recursos para Los Padres page. They have provided 70 students with permanent personal devices and are coordinating with schools to ensure there is no duplication of effort.

6: INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION REGARDING INDIAN EDUCATION

Fredina Drye-Romero, Education Programs Professional; Stacey Montooth, Executive Director of the Nevada Indian Commission; and Gerald Hunter, College and Career Coach of the Yerington Paiute Tribe, conducted a PowerPoint presentation regarding [Indian Education](#). Dave Brancamp, Director of Standards and Instructional Support; Dr. Stacey Joyner, Education Programs Supervisor; Emily Champlin, Education Programs Professional; and Alberto Quintero, Education Programs Professional, were also present to contribute to the presentation.

Ms. Drye-Romero is part of the Southern Paiute Tribe and enrolled with the Kaibab Band of Paiute in Northern Arizona, with close affiliations to her mother's Tribe, the Moapa Band of Paiutes. Stacey Montooth is a citizen of the Walker River Paiute Tribe, and Gerald Hunter's affiliations are Pyramid Lake Paiute, Washoe, and Oglala Lakota.

Member Ortiz asked if Nevada Administrative Code (NAC) 391.233, which relates to an endorsement and related exemption to teach Great Basin Native American language, specifies only one language or a specific language. Ms. Drye-Romero noted that the Great Basin Native American Language Endorsement refers to four languages indigenous to the region's tribes: Southern Paiute, Northern Paiute, Washoe, and Western Shoshone. Of the 17 districts in the State, the only district to provide this opportunity is the Washoe County School District (WCSD), which offers Northern Paiute to any students interested in learning the language. Member Ortiz asked if there was a reason that WCSD was the only district to participate, such as a lack of resources or lack of effort. Ms. Drye-Romero noted that it is a combination, but an additional issue is the loss of fluent speakers available to teach languages. This issue is being addressed in part by younger speakers, as well as history and language symposia hosted to share information and model systems. Douglas County School District is currently attempting to add a Native American Language class, but it is a long process to draft curriculum to content standards. Member Wayne Workman added that districts are open to providing language instruction, but have struggled to match resources; for example, Lyon County School District had struggled to find a qualified teacher to instruct students.

Member Ortiz applauded Mr. Hunter's work and supported tracking his progress to illustrate his success in such a way that the program could be modeled and replicated for other groups. Mr. Hunter added that habitual truancy dropped from 59% in year one to 4% in year three. Member Ortiz agreed that children feeling valued, appreciated, and respected, including feeling that their culture is valued and respected, is a primary factor in having students attend and succeed in school. President Wynn seconded this. Ms. Drye-Romero clarified that the Nevada Youth Community Project was meant to develop a best practices model which could later be integrated into the State. The current grant was written very specifically and has seen great success, and there is hope that future grants and funding can be acquired to expand Indian Education programs in Nevada.

Member Ortiz asked about the total number of birth through five students that could be served, versus the number currently being served. Ms. Champlin requested time to check the numbers but did report that Nevada is currently only serving 11% of four-year-olds in the Nevada State Pre-K program. Dr. Joyner noted that Head Start is a federally funded program that serves children birth to five who are at 100% at the poverty level or below. The State Pre-K program has an income limit of 200% of the poverty level. Placement of the State Pre-K programs must be done in such a way that they do not draw away students already enrolled in Head Start programs. Member Ortiz emphasized that early childhood partners are crucial in getting complete counts for the 2020 Census, as birth through five are critically undercounted.

President Wynn noted that multicultural standards and multicultural education is critical and would be an appropriate strand for the DEI Workgroup to track. She also referenced a Nevada Independent article which discussed a partnership with the Walden Family Foundation to investigate the impact of COVID-19 on rural education.

7: FUTURE MEETINGS AND AGENDA ITEMS

President Wynn requested data and the ultimate resolution from the ConnectingKidsNV program and efforts to close the digital divide.

Director Montooth reported that Nevada has 27 Tribal Nations, Bands, and Colonies, and only three could be considered urban. Some rural communities are closer to urban areas or town, such as Yerington or Fallon, but others are more remote. The Yomba Shoshone Tribe for example, must drive 50 minutes on dirt roads to reach their administration building, and their closest town is Gabbs, Nevada, which is so small it lacks a local grocery store. Issues of connectivity vary dramatically. The Nevada Indian Commission has been working extensively with OSIT; five Tribal Nations have successfully worked with various programs to attain connectivity, and an additional ten are in progress. Two further Nations have committed to purchasing devices and hotspots for all of their students using CARES Act funds. Director Montooth stated that she felt Nevada was a little ahead of the curve with regard to its support for Tribal Nations in education; President Wynn emphasized that they needed to be equal to every other student in Nevada, not just ahead of the curve for Tribal Nations in other states. President Wynn further emphasized that circumstances tolerated in the past are not good enough for our diversity, equity, and inclusion aspirations.

8: PUBLIC COMMENT #2

No public comment.

9: ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 3:36 P.M.