

**NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
DECEMBER 10, 2020  
9:00 A.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**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

**Via Videoconference**

Alex Gallegos  
Cathy McAdoo  
Elaine Wynn  
Felicia Ortiz  
Katherine Dockweiler  
Kevin Melcher  
Mark Newburn  
Mike Walker  
Robert Blakely  
Tamara Hudson  
Wayne Workman

**BOARD MEMBERS-ELECT PRESENT**

Katie Coombs, Member-Elect  
Rene Cantu, Member-Elect  
Tim Hughes, Member-Elect

**DEPARTMENT STAFF PRESENT**

Jhone Ebert, Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Dr. Jonathan Moore, Deputy Superintendent for Student Achievement  
Heidi Haartz, Deputy Superintendent for Business and Support Services  
Felicia Gonzales, Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement  
Jessica Todtman, Chief Strategy Officer  
Peter Zutz, Administrator, Office of Assessment, Data, and Accountability Management  
Dr. Patrick Bell, Education Programs Supervisor, Office of Assessment, Data, and Accountability Management  
Dr. Gunes Kaplan, Education Programs Professional, Office of Assessment, Data, and Accountability Management

**LEGAL STAFF PRESENT**

**Via Videoconference**

Greg Ott, Chief Deputy Attorney General

**PRESENTERS AND FACILITATORS IN ATTENDANCE**

Andy Lott, Nevada Succeeds  
Candice Meiries, Regional Professional Development Programs  
Jeanine Collins, Executive Director Nevada Succeeds  
Mike Lang, InspirED Global Fellow, Nevada Succeeds and Educator, Clark County School District  
Stacy Bird, Regional Professional Development Programs  
Tom Vander Ark, CEO, Getting Smarter

## **PARTICIPANTS IN ATTENDANCE**

### **Via Videoconference**

Dr. Melody Rose, Chancellor, Nevada System of Higher Education

Dr. Kristen McNeill, Superintendent, Washoe County School District Dr. Michele Robinson,  
Superintendent, Elko County School District

Pam Teel, Superintendent, Lincoln County

Rebecca Feiden, Executive Director, State Public Charter School Authority

Dr. Summer Stephens, Superintendent, Churchill County School District

Tate Else, Superintendent, Eureka County School District

Ben Hayes, Chief Accountability Officer, Washoe County School District

Dr. Felicia Rutledge, Project Facilitator, Clark County School District

Dr. Jose Delfin, Associate Superintendent of Human Resources, Clark County School District

Malena Raymond, President, Washoe County School District Board of Trustees

Roxanne James, Principal, Clark County School District

## **AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE**

### **Via Livestream**

### **1: CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL; PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Meeting called to order at 9:00 A.M. by President Elaine Wynn. Quorum was established. President Wynn led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **2: PUBLIC COMMENT #1**

No public comment.

### **3: APPROVAL OF FLEXIBLE AGENDA**

**Vice President Mark Newburn moved to approve a flexible agenda. Member Robert Blakely seconded. Motion passed.**

### **4: PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Wynn provided several updates regarding Board membership. Dawn Miller, the Nevada Association of School Boards appointee, concluded her service of nearly four years in November. Mike Walker was nominated to serve as the Nevada Association of School Boards representative effective this meeting; he serves on the Carson City School District Board of Trustees and is a principal in Lyon County School District. Members Kevin Melcher and Robert Blakely would conclude their terms as of January 1, 2021; President Wynn thanked all three members for their dedication, care, and service. Newly elected Board members were introduced, including Tim Hughes, who works for the New Teacher Project (TNTP); Katie Coombs, a columnist; and Dr. Rene Cantu, who serves as the Executive Director of Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG) in Nevada. She also noted that Vice President Newburn had been appointed by the Governor to serve in her place representing the business community.

President Wynn shared that she would be stepping down from her position as President of the State Board of Education, which she has been honored to serve on since 2012. She reflected that serving on the Board had been a great privilege and was confident that the Board was in good hands.

President Wynn then recognized retiring Nevada Department of Education (NDE or Department) staff. Jason Dietrich, Director of the Office of Educator Development, Licensure, and Family Engagement retired after 6 years with the Department and 30 years with the State; he is credited with leading the transition to the Online Portal for Applications and Licensure (OPAL) and modernizing NDE's licensure operation. Melissa Scott, Assistant Director in the Office of Career Readiness, Adult Learning, and Education Options retired after 14 years with the Department and was crucial in updating Nevada's Perkins Plan. Darrin Hardman, Education Programs Professional in the Office of Standards and Instructional Support retired after 16 years with the Department and was a large contributor to Read by Grade 3. Kim Boles, a Grants Analyst in the Office of Inclusive Education retired after 30 years with the Department and 32 years with the State and contributed to countless efforts. Kim Schlesener, a Program Officer in the Office of Department Support retired after 26 years with the State and was always willing to assist her colleagues.

Finally, President Wynn reported that 99.6 percent of all students in Nevada have devices and connectivity thanks to the efforts of the Connecting Kids coalition and district and school leaders, educators, and staff. The Family Support Center will wind down operation on Friday, December 11, 2020, and its remaining work will be maintained by Clark County School District.

### **5: SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Superintendent Jhone Ebert welcomed new Board Members and thanked President Wynn for her unwavering leadership of the Board over the last 8 years and the leadership, passion, and grace she has modeled over the 20 months of the Superintendent's tenure. She also thanked the Family Support Center for their tireless work.

Superintendent Ebert reported that she and Deputy Superintendent of Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement Felicia Gonzales visited the City of North Las Vegas and their Southern Nevada Urban Micro Academy (SNUMA), where children were thriving and engaging within a safe learning environment.

Deputy Superintendent Gonzales reported that seven districts and 21 charter schools are engaged with the Taskforce Initiative for Educator Safety and Screening (TIES) program. The program was launched on December 2, 2020. Superintendent Ebert updated that all districts have also received their allotments of personal protective equipment (PPE).

Superintendent Ebert added that the Commission on School Funding has begun its work to develop a definition of optimal funding and draft documents for the public to explain the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan. Their next meeting will be held on December 18, 2020 at which time they will begin considering revenue sources to provide additional funding to education.

Superintendent Ebert noted that she introduced the work of the Department and the Board to new legislators during their orientation. When asked about the most important topic for education in this Session, Superintendent Ebert highlighted that equity in the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan and education funding itself are crucial. Department bill draft requests focused on themes of equity, recovery, and alignment, and did not have a budgetary impact, instead focusing on streamlining efficiencies and bolstering alignment with the 2020 Statewide Plan for the Improvement of Pupils (STIP).

## **6: APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

**Member Felicia Ortiz moved to approve the consent agenda. Member Blakely seconded. Motion passed.**

## **7: INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION PURSUANT TO NRS 385.040(2), FOCUSING ON THE GOALS AND BENCHMARKS OF THE STATE FOR IMPROVING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT**

NRS 385.040(2) requires that at least one of the meetings of the State Board each year must include a discussion with the superintendents of the school districts, presidents of the boards of trustees of the school districts, representatives of the governing bodies of charter schools, representatives of the governing bodies of university schools for profoundly gifted pupils and the chairs of all boards, commissions, and councils in the public education system in this State to discuss:

- (a) The goals and benchmarks of the State for improving the academic achievement of pupils enrolled in public schools;
- (b) The effects of those goals and benchmarks on the school districts and public schools;
- (c) The status of the school districts and public schools in achieving the goals and benchmarks; and
- (d) The status of any corrective actions imposed on a school district or public school.

Superintendent Jhone Ebert opened the conversation for invited community stakeholders to provide reflection and thanked them for contributing to the Department and Board's process of continuous improvement in providing services to students, educators, and families.

Dr. Melody Rose, Chancellor of the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE), provided testimony regarding collaboration between NSHE and NDE. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Malena Raymond, President, Washoe County School District Board of Trustees, provided testimony regarding collaboration between Washoe County School District and NDE. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Dr. Kristen McNeill, Superintendent, Washoe County School District, provided testimony regarding engagement and collaboration at the State and district level. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Jeff Church, Member-Elect, Washoe County School District Board of Trustees, provided testimony regarding education. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

The Board proceeded with further agenda items and noted that if additional invitees arrived to provide testimony, the Board would use the flexible agenda to return to this item.

## **8: INFORMATION, DISCUSSION, AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION WORKGROUP OF THE NEVADA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

Member Hudson provided an update to the Board regarding the November 20, 2020 meeting of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Workgroup. The Workgroup received presentations regarding competency-based education and the Department's work with the National Equity Project and demographics of Department staff.

The Workgroup received an update on the progress of the pilot program for competency-based education taking place in Churchill, Washoe, and Clark County School Districts and the future recommendations regarding competency-based education. The Blue Ribbon Commission for a Globally Prepared Nevada is examining regulations and policies to make recommendations to increase flexibility for schools and districts; these recommendations will include but are not limited to competency-based education, independent study, distance learning, and instructional time.

The Department reported that they recently completed a series of equity trainings with the National Equity Project; Member Hudson reflected that to provide an equitable education to our students, we must first understand what equity is and share it out.

President Wynn emphasized that equity work also needed to be focused on local contexts. Member Cathy McAdoo addressed that collaboration on issues of equity between K-12 and higher education was crucial, which President Wynn supported in addressing that wraparound services are often lacking, but much needed, in transitioning to a postsecondary context. Member Melcher added that he has worked with the Education Innovation Collaborative, which works on building local designs for competency-based education and are collaborating between K-12 and higher education.

## **9: INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION REGARDING THE 4-YEAR COHORT GRADUATION RATES FOR THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR**

Peter Zutz, Administrator, Office of Assessment, Data, and Accountability Management (ADAM) and Dr. Gunes Kaplan, Education Programs Professional, ADAM, conducted a PowerPoint presentation regarding the [Four-year Cohort Graduation Rates for the 2019-20 School Year](#).

Responding to Vice President Newburn, Superintendent Ebert confirmed that more students are taking advantage of the more rigorous college- and career-ready diploma. Vice President Newburn highlighted that during a meeting with the Clark County Black Caucus, they reported that schools with high populations of African American students did not offer the courses needed to receive a college- and career-ready diploma, which must be addressed. President Wynn asked how to validate that diplomas are delivering as promised without tracking students into their postsecondary studies. Member Hudson reported that her son received a college- and career-ready diploma and was well-prepared for his transition to college.

Member Hudson asked about next steps to address the gaps for students of color, who show declining graduation numbers. Member Robert Blakely noted that a goal of creating the college- and career-ready diploma was to improve those outcomes, and next steps should include gathering feedback from colleges and universities about student preparation to assess the success of the program. Vice President Newburn noted that the college- and career-ready diploma was designed to completely prepare students. President Wynn supported linking with higher education to validate the preparation of students but reflected that graduation rates reflect that African American students are still struggling and need further supports.

Member Ortiz raised concerns regarding access to courses which would allow students to attain the college- and career-ready diploma. She noted the disparity between student groups attaining these diplomas and how those numbers could be evened out and supported Member Gallegos's suggestion for deeper engagement with students regarding these topics. Mr. Zutz responded that having clear data presents an opportunity to engage with these questions, but as the data are examined, more qualitative

data may be needed to fully understand the trends. Member Ortiz asked for further focus on an action plan. Superintendent Ebert clarified that the Statewide Plan for the Improvement of Pupils (STIP) includes action plans and strategies, with focuses including equity and access, and updates would be forthcoming regarding the outcomes of those strategies and goals.

Member Dockweiler referenced that Senate Bill 320 (2019) was an equity-centered bill that tracked students into more rigorous courses, and that work was beginning to address issues of equity and access. Member Melcher highlighted that the Nevada System of Higher Education, Nevada Department of Education, and the Department of Training, Employment and Rehabilitation collaborate to support the Nevada P-20 Workforce Data Research System (NPWR) website ([www.npwr.nv.gov](http://www.npwr.nv.gov)), which tracks longitudinal data for students. Mr. Zutz emphasized that this collaboration can provide context for the long-term outcomes of Nevada students. Member Blakely added that the Graduation Committee worked to increase the requirements to graduate from high school, which have not yet gone into effect. Member Gallegos further supported bringing students into the conversation regarding why they chose particular diplomas, and whether the ACT requirement for the college- and career-ready diploma is a relevant factor.

## **11: INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION REGARDING KEY ISSUES FACING NEVADA STUDENTS AND EDUCATORS**

Jeanine Collins, Executive Director, Nevada Succeeds; and Mike Lang, InspirED Global Fellow, Digital Engineer, PBS Digital Innovator, and Educator in Clark County School District facilitated a discussion with district superintendents and the State Public Charter School Authority regarding [Key Issues](#) facing Nevada students and educators, including the definition of equity, the portrait of a graduate, and what it means to be “globally prepared.” This item was introduced as an extension of agenda item 7, providing a more collaborative opportunity to engage with goals and progress to improve student achievement across Nevada.

Superintendent Ebert began by presenting an overview of the definition of equity, equity in the Department’s STIP, and how the STIP shapes the idea of “globally prepared” in relation to the values and goals of the Department and the STIP.

Discussion was facilitated in-person and via chat feature in a live-edit document; this document was screen shared during the meeting. For a complete record of the discussion, please see Appendix B.

Ms. Collins invited Member Dockweiler to expand on her thoughts noted in the chat regarding intelligent humility. Member Dockweiler reflected that she grew up on an American Indian Reservation where community and culture were important; when she left for college, she met many people who remained isolated in what they knew. In a world where there is so much to see and so many perspectives, she reflected how important it is to recognize and respect the diversity of perspectives there are, and to grow, learn, and share. Member Hudson expressed the importance of being able to engage with students where they are and understand the diversity and backgrounds with which they arrive to the classroom. Member Ortiz expressed that a shift in perspective is needed regarding multilingualism as we move towards a global economy, and a greater focus should be placed on having students graduate multilingual with the corresponding cultural competency. Member Dockweiler agreed with the benefits of multilingual education, and Member Ortiz highlighted that Nevada participates in the Seal of Biliteracy. Superintendent Ebert reflected that difficult conversations about equity are a learning opportunity, and that it is important to meet both students and adults where they are.

Regarding equity, Superintendent Kristen McNeill shared that policy drives the work and must be developed in conjunction with action steps, which must be facilitated with clear resource allocations. Vice President Newburn highlighted that schools only have so many minutes in a day, and in order to add something, something else may need to be removed. The challenge to having something occur in the classroom is facing the number of minutes in the day or having the strategies to teach multiple things at once or teach more in less time. Member-elect Rene Cantu highlighted the importance of finding ways to

implement this information in practical, effective, and equitable ways. Rebecca Feiden noted that collaborative work within the State and across the nation is crucial.

Dr. Felicia Rutledge, Project Facilitator, Clark County School District and Roxanne James, Principal, Clark County School District presented regarding their work on the portrait of a graduate and the learner profile and engaged further conversation via the chat feature, available in Appendix B.

*[Convenience Break]*

Dr. Summer Stephens, Superintendent, Churchill County School District presented regarding the profile of a learner in Churchill County School District, including their work to provide student-centered, competency-based education. Tom Vander Ark, CEO of Getting Smart, joined Superintendent Stephens to facilitate discussion and reflect on the portrait of a graduate and learner profile.

Discussion was facilitated in-person and via chat feature in a live-edit document; this document was screen shared during the meeting. For a complete record of the discussion, please see Appendix B.

Superintendent Stephens reflected on the spirit of leadership, driving change, and the iterative process. She highlighted that kids are connected more now than ever before, and “global” really means anything taking place outside of our walls.

Member Wayne Workman noted that teacher efficacy is the highest yield for impact on student learning, and interrogating teacher belief in the success of the student is crucial. For students to achieve, there must be a belief that they can. Lyon County School District developed a student bill of rights to highlight the rights that every student has and orient to student success.

President Wynn highlighted that community support is critical but noted that nothing occurs in a vacuum and this work could be considered progressive in a conservative time. She emphasized the “why” and noted the importance of pushing why this work is important in order to drive success for community buy-in, legislative support, etc., in a way that is not politicized. Mr. Vander Ark agreed that if you want to innovate and not be fired, you need to build community support.

Mr. Vander Ark highlighted the importance of leadership development in furthering this work. He emphasized the importance of a conversation, leaning in to listen to educators and parents, responding to pain points and opportunities. Superintendent McNeill emphasized that goals and action items for the portrait of a graduate must be incorporated into the strategic plan, and once in the strategic plan, resources must be allocated to support it within the budget development process. She expressed that while budgets may seem dry, they are fundamentally equity documents.

Superintendent Ebert thanked participants, attendees, facilitators, and staff for their work and contributions to the conversation, which Member Ortiz and President Wynn joined in.

## **10: INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION REGARDING THE RESULTS FROM THE 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR ACT ASSESSMENT**

Peter Zutz, Administrator, ADAM, and Dr. Patrick Bell, Education Programs Supervisor, ADAM, conducted a PowerPoint presentation regarding the results of the [2019-20 School Year ACT Assessment](#).

Member Ortiz confirmed with the presenters that the math proficiency scores for English Learners and students with disabilities were accurate.

## **12: FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Vice President Newburn requested further information regarding the role of vaccines in reopening schools, and the role of assessment during COVID-19 conditions, specifically what is useful or beneficial at this time.

**13: PUBLIC COMMENT #2**

Washoe Education Association submitted public comment regarding teacher shortages and substitute licensing. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

The Nevada State Education Association submitted public comment regarding teacher vaccinations. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Jeff Church, Member-Elect, Washoe County School District Board of Trustees, submitted public comment regarding education. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

HOPE for Nevada submitted public comment regarding President Wynn's tenure. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

**14: ADJOURNMENT**

President Wynn emphasized that the Board has enjoyed a civil camaraderie, which has allowed the Board to move forward and make progress in its goals. In parting, she asked that the Board continue to remember their shared cause – why they are all at the table – and continue their work in supporting their goals. She noted that when miscommunications arise, they are best resolved offline, and she wished most that the Board continue to collaborate as they have to improve education in Nevada.

Meeting adjourned at 2:03 P.M.



*Appendix A: Statements Given During Public Comment Periods One and Two and Agenda Item Seven*

1. Dr. Melody Rose, Chancellor, Nevada System of Higher Education, provided testimony under agenda item 7.
2. Malena Raymond, President, Washoe County School District Board of Trustees, provided testimony under agenda item 7.
3. Dr. Kristen McNeill, Superintendent, Washoe County School District, provided testimony under agenda item 7.
4. Jeff Church, Member-Elect, Washoe County School District Board of Trustees, submitted testimony under agenda item 7.
5. Washoe Education Association submitted public comment regarding teacher shortages and substitute licensing.
6. The Nevada State Education Association submitted public comment regarding teacher vaccinations.
7. Jeff Church, Member-Elect, Washoe County School District Board of Trustees, submitted public comment regarding education.
8. HOPE for Nevada submitted public comment regarding President Wynn's tenure.

### **Item A1, Dr. Melody Rose**

Good morning everyone, Madame President, Members of the Board, Superintendent Ebert. For the record, my name is Melody Roes, I am proud to be the Chancellor for the Nevada System of Higher Education. Thank you very much for including me for a few moments in your important work this morning. It's a pleasure to meet you all virtually and I can't wait to have the opportunity to be in the same room when conditions allow.

Just wanted to say a few words of introduction, as well as to thank you for the work that you are all doing on behalf of Nevada's children. We're so grateful for your dedication and leadership, particularly at this incredibly challenging moment. Just a few words about my own background, you may have heard I have spent 25 years in higher education in the state of Oregon. I was Chancellor of the state public university system. I also spent time as a campus president and moved up through the ranks as a faculty member and administrator.

But what might be more important to you all to know given your work is that I'm a first-generation college student from an economically distressed family in Los Angeles. That background of mine having been brought up in a low-income family, I used to say that in my household as a kid there were more beers than books in my home. I tell you that only to say that I was incredibly blessed to have educators throughout my K-12 experience who intervened on my behalf, who made my path possible. It was actually at my third high school, a high school guidance counselor who pulled me aside one day in the hall and stuck a college application in my hand, who I have to credit with actually even thinking about going to college. At the time, I was getting ready to think about my next steps. My cousins that were in high school were having their first children. It was that opportunity that a guidance counselor and some very loving and supportive teachers gave me, that completely transformed my life path and made the life that I've been able to provide my children possible. I owe everything to those, what I call "other mothers" who helped me through a very rocky childhood.

Obviously, I love higher education. I went to college at my university, a public university in California, and never left. And so as you can imagine, what really motivated me about this opportunity in Nevada is to continue to push the envelope for underrepresented kids in our community because I know more than most the transformational impact that a college degree can have. I'm just thrilled to know I'll be in partnership with all of you. The state of Oregon takes very seriously the concept of PK-20 education so I have grown up professionally with that mindset, that your success in K-12 education is our success in higher education, and that we have a responsibility to do everything within our power to assist young people coming up through the pipeline. I'm just so pleased to have had the opportunity to meet with Superintendent Ebert a few times now. I think we have, as the late Congressman John Lewis used to say, I think we have some good trouble ahead to get into collaboratively as we look at really moving the needle, closing the achievement gap in our state, and moving all of our young people forward into productive and meaningful lives.

So we're looking at a number of opportunities to partner, you will probably be hearing more from us about those opportunities around teacher prep, around FAFSA completion, around dual credit, these are all issues that I feel very passionately about, and I know my colleague Superintendent Ebert feels the same. So, I just wanted to say thank you for all your work, introduce myself, and tell you how much I look forward to partnering with you in the years ahead. Thank you.

**Item A2, Malena Raymond**

Good morning everyone, thank you so much for the invitation and the opportunity to address the State Board of Education today. As was mentioned, my name is Malena Raymond, and I am the President of the Washoe County School District Board of Trustees. Our boards share a common goal of student success. It is critical that we are aligned, coordinated, and working towards that common goal. This year has been like no other year and I want to thank Superintendent Ebert and her staff for working in such close collaboration with our Superintendent and her staff. We have had to tackle many barriers at the state level in order to continue meeting the needs of our students during this unprecedented pandemic. But the Governor's directives and guidance from the state level have played a key role in giving our educators the flexibility they needed to maintain as much educational continuity as possible. As an aside there, just knowing that that support existed as a Board president and that the level of support for our Superintendent was so strong, made all of these challenging decision easier for me as a Board president, and I believe I can speak on behalf of our entire Board, that we are just so appreciative of that support and the guidance that we have received from the Nevada Department of Education.

We know the future is uncertain and the economic and fiscal outlook is bleak. We ask that you continue the efforts to maintain alignments as we look forward to another biennial budget and legislative process. We need to amplify the voice to improve equitable education opportunities for students through additional investment of state dollars and remove any and all non-essential mandates on the education system. As I end my tenure on the Washoe County School District Board of Trustees, I am confident in our newly elected trustees, our Superintendent, and our team of highly, highly dedicated educators to work with you and alongside you in the name of student success. Our state depends on it. Thank you again for the invitation and for allowing me to speak to you today.

### **Item A3, Dr. Kristen McNeill**

Thank you and good morning everyone, good morning President Wynn, good to see you. Thank you so much for this opportunity to speak and address the State Improvement Plan this morning. I'm Dr. Kristen McNeill, the Superintendent of the Washoe County School District. As President Raymond just mentioned, this year has been full of unexpected changes, and I appreciate the constant communication from Superintendent Ebert and her dedicated staff. As recently as two weeks ago, she participated in our Board of Trustees meeting, offering insight from the state level about the importance of having students in school as much as can be safely provided. Her comments were late in the evening, I think at about 11:30 PM. She has made herself available to NASS, our regular group meetings, on demand, and on that the coordination and communication has made the process as seamless as possible during these extraordinary circumstances that we are all facing.

Specifically related to the State Improvement Plan, our team continues to be committed to improvement. Key members of my staff participate in school improvement processes at the state level on an ongoing basis, being active and engaged members of the Blue Ribbon Committee. We are doing our very best to track the academic achievement gaps exacerbated by this pandemic and varied learning models required to maintain public health. We are absolutely committed to addressing those gaps as we move past the pandemic into a much-needed recovery mode.

We ask that we continue to work together in our approach to school accountability and testing as we look to the next school year. Working with the new landscape at the federal level will require thoughtful analysis on the costs and benefits of testing and accountability and how those will have impacts on our schools and families. We know our commitment to mental health has got to remain a key priority throughout our state. This pandemic has had significant impacts on our students and staff members mental health and expanding access to support for mental health must be a top priority going forward. During the agenda item number 11 today, we look forward to sharing the work we've done at the district level around our pathway and a portrait of a graduate and how that guides our work. We have seen Nevada as a whole, and our own district thrive in aligning together for amazing gains in our graduation rates. We know however, that the next frontier in this work is to make sure the high school diploma is a promise to our community that our graduates are equipped academically, analytically, technically, socially, and emotionally to thrive in careers and postsecondary education for the betterment of our entire state. We have begun work incorporating the ideas of a portrait of a graduate and have a long history of using our pathway to graduation as an organizing principal to ensuring monitoring and supports are in place at each and every point for each and every one of our children along that pathway.

We look forward to collaborating with the Nevada Department of Education and other LEAs on this work in anticipation that the best excitement and excellence will stem from each community tailoring the notion of the portrait around what makes them unique. We look to continue our collaboration in key areas like fiscal alignment with school schedules, removing any barriers to licensure, and ensuring the appropriate level of accountability and local control and flexibility as we discussed last year. This pandemic has increased the need for all of us to work towards increased and equitable funding for all of our students to be able to recover and reengage in a competitive way with students across the world. Thank you again for your time.

## Item A4, Jeff Church

Dear DOE Board:

I am Jeff Church and was elected to serve as Washoe County Trustee (Dist A). I look forward to the challenge as various studies on ACT or overall place Nevada #50 or #45 in the nation. A few comments for the record and consideration:

### RESEARCH!

I have been involved as a watchdog of local issues and I'm smart enough to know I'm not smart enough to solve all educational problem. So all I'm asking is innovative research! We are blessed with two great universities and there are both on line and thousands of other universities with all disciplines- not just education- that can research these free or almost free. You have students doing their Masters or PhD thesis that can study actual issues. Education, MBAs, Trades and Engineering, etc.

Having input from others here are just three issues worth (free thesis) research that's all I ask:

1Live In Academy I and II: Far too many students are homeless or lack parental supervision (drugs, incarceration etc). Reports too of far too many using drugs or marijuana. I'd suggest research into either at state or local level: (1) A live-in Academy for those disadvantaged bit motivated students and (2) A line-in Academy for those needing discipline & direction. The savings to the criminal justice system would be large and having future taxpayers, successful student vs burdens on society is a win-win.

2. Cruise Ship Learning Center (Federal Grant): Done laughing? The Cruise Ship industry was the #1 hardest hit worldwide and ship are sitting idled and it will be slow to cover. Nothing educates students like seeing the world. My military father too me all over! What of there were federal or private grants and students took educational cruises to other countries. In concept maybe two-week trips devoted to seeing disadvantaged countries and everyday dedicated to on board learning classes. So many kids have never been out of their county. If kids are using drugs, this might allow a bit of head clearing and grant them the opportunity to evaluate life choice options. \*Because of this and graffiti students and luggage would be tightly screened for weapons, drugs, marking material. Most likely they bring nothing and are issued uniforms. This too is a benefit to teachers and staff that of course are included in the adventure.

\*My feedback is that drug use maybe a factor in poor performance so the above options won't solve but help reduce that.

3. Is there any way to have Yea- Round Schools/ Mentoring/ Summer School etc to help those falling behind?

Jeff Church  
WatchDogJeff.com

## **Item A5, Washoe County Education Association**

Phil Kaiser, Vice President  
Washoe Education Association

Before the school year began in August, educators across the state, particularly in Washoe, were skeptical there would be enough substitute teachers because, against all health recommendations, the board of Trustees voted for in-person instruction. Washoe has been discussing the issue of the sub shortage for at least the last four years, and COVID-19 has certainly magnified the larger issue of people not entering education.

We know many substitutes are retired educators and are at an age when they face greater risk if they contract the disease. The idea that enough subs would be available seemed illogical and considering that many schools face shortages even in normal times, our skepticism was reinforced. As the semester wore on, and COVID cases in Washoe increased, more staff and students were excluded from schools until we ended up at the end of November with a shortage of over 200 subs. In Clark County, even with full distance learning, there are approximately 900 daily requests for a substitute teacher.

On November 30th, we were informed that help was on the way when the Nevada Department of Education and Governor Sisolak announced they would simply lower the standards required to receive a substitute teaching license. Now, the minimum requirement for a substitute teacher is a high school diploma or GED and a fingerprint card. That's it. Students will have their academic and social-emotional needs addressed by substitutes who have no college coursework at all. It's also unclear the length of these licenses. 6 months? 5 years? Can they fill a long-term position?

Critics of public education have long said that we are simply glorified babysitters, and evidently the Department of Education and the Governor agree. Except, there is no glory either. This proposal undermines and devalues the professionalism of educators in Nevada, and potentially harms not only students, but also the public perception of education in our state. The question now becomes: what is the purpose of our public schools? From this decision it appears schools are simply daycare facilities, a place for students to go so parents and guardians are able to work.

This decision does not honor the mission of the Washoe County School District which call for providing a quality education that prepares all children for a successful future. This certainly cannot be said to be a best practice for educators or districts, as there is no qualified staff engaging students in content learning. Substitute teaching is a demanding job that requires positive attitudes, organization, mental preparation, flexibility, knowledge, and skill.

Education is one of the most important professions in our society. That is why standards for education and certification have been established. Professional development is required annually, along with observations and evaluations that are extensive and rigorous. The Washoe County School District recognized the importance of professional development by starting this year with a full week of professional development for certified educators to prepare for the vastly different school structure. One of the many items discussed included the social- emotional learning for our students. By simply requiring a high school diploma or GED, this very important aspect of an educators' role has been thrown out the window.

Educators are working harder and smarter than they ever have, and we are tired. We are not just tired because of the countless hours spent ensuring our kids have us there to teach and guide, but we are tired of the words. We're tired of hearing about how essential we are, but then seeing policies like this that devalue everything we do. We're tired of hearing how the economy runs through our schools, but then not being put near the front of the vaccine schedule so that we can return to in-person instruction. We're tired of being called heroes and not receiving the support we deserve when we demand that officials listen to educators.

Educators are tired, but we're still not the ones who need a wakeup call.

### **Item A6, Nevada State Education Association**

The Nevada State Education Association has been the voice of Nevada educators for over 100 years. NSEA represents a majority of educators across the state, with members in every Nevada school district including teachers, other licensed education professionals, and education support professionals (ESPs) who provide vital services to students in Nevada's public education system.

In our history, there have been few more challenging times than the past year with the COVID-19 crisis. After school buildings were ordered closed last spring, NSEA members quickly responded, with classroom teachers engaging their students in distance learning and food service workers on the front lines, providing meals to families in our districts. This semester, our members are responding in a diversity of ways depending on their district and the status of the COVID-19 crisis in their communities. Some educators are back at their school building offering in-person instruction. Others are working in hybrid models, juggling in-person learning with distance learning opportunities. Many others, including in Clark County, are working to create meaningful education experiences through full distance-learning. This summer, NSEA supported the work of the Department of Education to develop "Nevada's Path Forward: A Framework for a Safe, Efficient, and Equitable Return to School Buildings". We felt this was the proper framework, along with consultation with local health districts, to safely reopen and operate school buildings this school year. Educators, as much as anyone else, appreciate the importance of returning to school for in-person learning. Distance education is not an ideal replacement for in-person, classroom learning for most educators and students, and educators are concerned about the impact the COVID-19 crisis is having on education equity. Top concerns with full distance learning include providing the same level of education for all students, the complexity of teaching students with disabilities, and absenteeism. Also, most educators find distance learning and hybrid models more difficult with more time required to teach the same lessons.

However, educators also are very concerned about their health and the health and well-being of students. NSEA has consistently raised concerns that districts lack the resources needed to follow the recommendations to safely open and operate school buildings during this pandemic. And we know all districts have felt pressured to open or keep open buildings, even when the baseline, lower community transmission rates were not met. This includes recent comments made by the State Superintendent. Unfortunately, the decision to resume in-person learning in Washoe County was made earlier this year while community transmission of COVID was above the baseline threshold and went against guidance issued by the Washoe County Health District. We know that Washoe County has experienced elevated COVID-19 cases ever since school reopening, including their highest reported case numbers in recent weeks. This includes a spike in number of cases associated with K-12 students and school district staff last month. These numbers gave WCSD little choice but to move to full distance learning for middle and high school students. With record COVID transmission likely to continue through the winter holidays, it will also not be safe for in-person education to begin in Clark County in January.

With recent good news on the development of vaccines juxtaposed with the alarming increase in COVID-19 cases and hospitalizations, NSEA believes it will be critical to prioritize educator access to COVID vaccinations as soon as possible, before safely reopening or returning to school buildings after the holidays. NSEA has asked the Governor to make this a priority, and we appreciate any role the Board of Education can play to facilitate a safe return to school buildings next year. Thank you.

**Item A7, Jeff Church**

Dear DOE Board:

I am Jeff Church and was elected to serve as Washoe County Trustee (Dist A

A few comments for the record and consideration:

OML: the US Supreme Court just ruled in a New York case that the 1st Amendment still applies during Covid and any restriction be narrowly tailored. We can go to a casino but not a public meeting. I'd suggest that live "zoom" style comments are allowed by other agencies and the State/ DOE could do the same. Likewise with telephonic as not all have computer access and the present model disenfranchises lower income and minorities. I do suggest an "in cue" delay to avoid improper comments or worse.

**RECRUITING TEACHERS AND STAFF:**

I note the Recruiting Task Force meets in a few days. I taught Recruiting nationwide and would ask to be allowed a 10 min presentation to that board at some point and or to your board. I could submit the Powerpoint in advance for approval.

Niche Report and NY Times Report on NV Education: Some like to quote the so-called Niche Report or a New York Times Study on education. Myself and others have debunked those, just google them:

<https://collingswoodeducation.org/2017/08/14/collingswood-school-rankings>

<https://officefordpolicy.com/2015/12/02/niche-rankings-need-some-salt>

The fact is based on ACT scores, Nevada is worst in the nation and two reliable studies place us 45th overall. I urge all to stop referencing the "Yelp" Style Niche Report. As to the NYT study- there is none, never was. Info on request.

Sincerely,  
Jeff Church  
WatchDogJeff.com



**Item A8, HOPE for Nevada**

December 10, 2020

Dear President Wynn, members of the board of Education, and the community at large,

On behalf of our Executive board and our 1200 member organization, we would like to take the opportunity to thank President Wynn for her service on Nevada's State Board of Education, and for the level of leadership with which she has pushed for meeting the needs of our children. When HOPE for Nevada formed almost seven years ago, we met with President Wynn to share our vision of community and parent engagement that we aspired to cultivate. Her response to us was "Show me. Don't tell me." This motto perfectly fits the culture of her presidency, driving action from all involved in the education world, through two Governors and three state superintendents, to prioritize the success of students. We have seen her encourage, question, support and demand where necessary and it has set an excellent example for other board members to dig in, sift through and find solutions to long-standing issues plaguing the success of our students.

Holding ALL of us accountable, from the families and students in school communities, the education professionals in districts, the department of education and Nevada's business community, she has created a truer shared responsibility for outcomes. This has informed our work with the Legislature, another key partner for our kids. When that partnership was lacking, we have seen her take matters into her own hands, utilizing her philanthropic resources and business connections to act swiftly, as evidenced in the incredible feat accomplished by ConnectingKidsNV, among countless others.

We appreciate the enormous amount of time, understanding, empathy and passion that President Wynn has dedicated to our state's future citizenry and we are looking forward to the continued no-nonsense leadership that has been established and embraced by her fellow board members.

Respectfully,  
HOPE for Nevada

*Appendix B: Transcript of Facilitated Discussion under Agenda Item Eleven*

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Response</i>
<p>What resonates with me about NDE’s definition of global competence and key insights from the article? What is the connection to equity?</p>	<p>Superintendent Stephens: What resonates with me is the importance for this being a process of iteration so that we ensure our opportunities are pertinent to the time--don’t want to encourage out of date skills with competencies.</p> <p>Ben Hayes: Perspective taking; Cross cultural communication skills; appreciation of culture.</p> <p>Superintendent Kristen McNeill: Global promise for our future needs to be ensured with priorities for all families and students.</p> <p>Member Dockweiler: What resonates with me is the notion of intelligent humility and understanding how vast the world is and how much learning we can engage in independently as well as collectively.</p> <p>Member Ortiz: Given the diversity of our state, the focus on cultural and linguistic proficiency is essential to our state’s economy and to ensure that our students are globally competitive. We are a global economy!</p> <p>Member Hudson: The importance of diversity and engaging learners</p> <p>Vice President Newburn: The need for technology competence</p> <p>Superintendent Ebert: I see entire communities joining in the discussion. People are willing to make themselves more vulnerable with what they know and what they don’t know.</p> <p>Member Workman: Being a “contributor to the world”</p>
<p>What might I challenge or question about the definitions and insights? Why?</p>	<p>Member Ortiz: I’m curious about how the implementation of Global Education would look. It seems like the system is very opposed to change.</p> <p>Superintendent Stephens: I am wondering about what hurdles we have in law/policy that hold us back from a full implementation.</p> <p>Superintendent Robinson: I am curious about how we will implement global education for the greatest impact.</p> <p>Rene Cantu-Member Elect: How do we practically change systemic practices that result in inequitable outcomes?</p> <p>Member Ortiz: We will know that the system is serious about this work when there is investment in the implementation and measures of success.</p> <p>Member Hudson: I am wondering about the curriculum that allows students to investigate the world, consider a variety of perspectives, communicate ideas and take meaningful action.</p> <p>Member Newburn: I wonder how we fit this into the current school day.</p>

	<p>Jose Delfin: I am wondering about how restorative justice plays into the topic of race reparations.</p> <p>Superintendent McNeill: I am appreciating the deep level of thought given to the definitions and work; however, we must really dig into the actual action steps of this work and resource allocation.</p> <p>Michael Walker: I'm wondering how to better engage with diverse members of our school community to ensure our schools are a safe place for them to interact or participate.</p> <p>Member Dockweiler: I'm curious how the implicit biases of the adults may impact the implementation and application of the definitions with students</p> <p>Member Workman: I am wondering what changes to policy and law need to be made so this can happen.</p> <p>President Wynn: general philosophy</p> <p>Rebecca Feiden: I'm wondering how we can efficiently learn from the successes of each of our schools/school districts so we can accelerate change.</p>
<p>What do I especially aspire to helping make tangible as a leader in my community? Why?</p>	<p>Member Dockweiler: To remove barriers to student opportunities.</p> <p>Vice President Newburn: I aspire to make tangible equitable access.</p> <p>Karen: To ensure all students have the technological skills they need to be competitive in their future.</p> <p>Katie Coombs: Encouraging volunteering so that students see the need for understanding a diverse culture and meeting people they might not meet otherwise.</p> <p>Member Ortiz: Ooh easy, I want all families to have a clear understanding of Global Competence so that they can visualize/support their children in achieving that goal!</p> <p>Member Workman: As many personalized options for post-secondary schooling, career, military, etc. to our students based on their individual choices.</p> <p>Tim Hughes: The how- focusing on what it will actually take to move this vision into a reality, for ALL kids.</p> <p>Superintendent Stephens: I aspire to build conversations in our various stakeholder groups in the community to learn, grow, and bring to light what is possible.</p> <p>Superintendent McNeill: To have our marginalized populations no longer marginalized: true equity and parity</p> <p>Member Ortiz: @Kristen +1</p> <p>Member Ortiz: @Katie Coombs... love that! Builds empathy!</p>

	<p>Rene Cantu- Member Elect: For every student to be seen as valuable and to have opportunity rather than having students ranked and tracked down various paths based on external perceptions by gatekeepers.</p> <p>Jose Delfin: Listen, listen, listen, then assist for understanding and success</p> <p>Member McAdoo: Living and leading with a mindset of every one of us needs every one of us</p>
<p>Reflections on the Profile of a Learner/Graduate</p>	<p>Pam Teel: I'm appreciating the support of where districts are and setting the stage for forward thinking</p> <p>Member Ortiz: I appreciate the work that is being done in Churchill and I am curious to know how teachers are adapting/adopting the change to their teaching methodology. Can you elaborate panorama?</p> <p>Member Dockweiler: I'm curious how global aspects are being built into daily instruction</p> <p>Member Workman: I'm wondering how the profile of a learner or graduate impacts collective teacher/staff efficacy.</p> <p>Superintendent Ebert: Member Workman, I think this is a great space for you to add the work that Lyon County SD has been doing with your students and how they are expressing their needs.</p> <p>Tom Vander Ark: Churchill has 'whole child' focus. Best resources there are from TurnaroundUSA.org</p> <p>Tom Vander Ark: Member Ortiz: PanoramaEd.com is an SEL survey tool. CASEL.org also provides (and certifies) SEL resources. Turnaround just released a wellness index, something very valuable now <a href="https://turnaroundusa.org/well-being-index/">https://turnaroundusa.org/well-being-index/</a></p> <p>Member Hudson: I am appreciating hearing a district using data to help them improve and make meaningful community decisions for their students and community</p> <p>Member Ortiz: I really appreciate how much the district is using the model they are proposing for kids for the adults too!</p> <p>Tom Vander Ark: tetonscience.org does a great job of encouraging local-to-global projects (ie take on a water project in your backyard to begin learning about global water issues)</p> <p>Member Ortiz: @Tom! Thanks!</p> <p>Tom Vander Ark: TetonScience supports PlaceSchools.org a network of rural Microschools. Bill of Rights can be a great way to capture new set of commitments to learners</p> <p>Superintendent Stephens: Thank you Wayne! So important for them to be the focus -- i know that we need more student involvement in the development of the work because it is about them.</p>

Member Ortiz: @Member Workman, can you please share the Student Bill of Rights?

Member Ortiz: One of our local teachers has gotten innovative with Zoom and coined a program called “edutainment learning” to expose his students to experts and have guest teachers. Perfect example of this work in action.

Member Workman: Sure, I will email our student bill of rights (created by our students) to Superintendent Ebert and she can share it out if that works.

Superintendent Stephens: Thank you Wayne! So important for them to be the focus- I know that we need more student involvement in the development of the work because it is about them.

Member Ortiz: Thank you!

Member Hudson: @ Member Workman, that would be nice to see

Member Ortiz: Burning Question... how can we clone Dr. Stephens? ;)

Tom Vander Ark: Agree, member Ortiz, every state could use 500 of her!

Member Dockweiler: What is one first step that districts and schools can take to get this work off the ground?

Member Hudson: I have the same question, Member Dockweiler

Member Ortiz: I think Dr. Stephens and Member Workman should lead an effort to help this grow in Nevada. You two are doing great work! Please!

Tom Vander Ark: Encourage folks to start small and go fast

Superintendent Ebert: Yes, conversation and start!

Tom Vander Ark: Encourage folks to start small and go fast

Superintendent Ebert: It’s exactly what you are doing here today.

Pam Teel: If not now? When??

Superintendent Ebert: @Teel yes

Member Ortiz: Exactly! Our kids can’t afford to wait!

Member Melcher: Legislators need to be involved in early conversations not wait until we are way down the path... if we want their strong support for change.

Superintendent Stephens: 100% on the Budget Kristen! Thank you!

Member Ortiz: put your money where your mouth is!

President Wynn: We should develop some legislative champions

Superintendent Stephens: I love the idea of the legislative champions!

<p>What excites you about this topic today?</p>	<p>Member Ortiz: I would love to stop doing things that don't serve students and teachers... too much testing... focusing only test scores... seat time... etc.</p> <p>Superintendent Stephens: Use this type of forum (stakeholders with the State Board) for continued development</p> <p>Member Ortiz: I would love to see our funding model (District &gt; School) change to allow more innovation around CBL and hybrid learning.</p> <p>Member Workman: I'm excited about moving past compliance based education (Carnegie Units, seat time, assessment scores, etc.) into true authentic learning and student lead achievement.</p> <p>Member Dockweiler: using teacher/practitioner voice to build up/out. Always incorporating student voice. @Workman yes!</p> <p>Superintendent Teel: I'm not looking to hire the same teacher I was 3 years ago!</p> <p>Superintendent Stephens: Pam, that is powerful!</p> <p>Superintendent Robinson: I'm excited by the discussion and the collective focus on creating the culture and opportunities for all students and professionals</p> <p>Superintendent McNeill: When we speak to resource allocation on these types of issues and the upcoming legislative session we should be aware of how the new funding formula can have on impact on this work and equity throughout our state work for every student.</p> <p>Tom Vander Ark: great point Mike: takes new schools to incorporate profile skills into projects and serve as an advisor around profile.</p> <p>Superintendent Teel: Excited that this is about students!</p> <p>Tom Vander Ark: Thanks all. Let me know how we can help: tom@gettingsmart.com</p> <p>Member Ortiz: This has been phenomenal! Thank you all! Gives me so much hope!</p>
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