

**NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NEVADA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETING OF THE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION WORKGROUP
JANUARY 7, 2021
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
Felicia Ortiz
Tamara Hudson
Wayne Workman

DEPARTMENT STAFF PRESENT

Jhone Ebert, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Dr. Jonathan Moore, Deputy Superintendent of Student Achievement
Felicia Gonzales, Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement
Jessica Todtman, Chief Strategy Officer

LEGAL STAFF PRESENT

Via Videoconference

Greg Ott, Chief Deputy Attorney General

AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE

Via Livestream

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

Meeting called to order at 2:02 P.M. by Chair Tamara Hudson. Quorum was established. Chair Hudson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2: PUBLIC COMMENT #1

No public comment.

3: APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 20, 2020 DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION WORKGROUP MINUTES

Member Wayne Workman moved to approve the minutes of the November 7, 2020 meeting of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Workgroup. Member Felicia Ortiz seconded. Motion passed.

4: CHAIR’S REPORT

Chair Hudson provided an update on efforts to close the digital divide. She shared that on Tuesday, January 5 Connecting Kids Nevada announced that every K-12 student in Nevada participating in digital learning, either full or part time, have been provided with a device and connected to the internet. Work began in August when school districts were unable to confirm connectivity for nearly 120,000 students. Connecting Kids was established by the governor’s COVID-19 Task Force and is led by several prominent community partners. She reflected that while there is still work to be done, this effort illustrated what can be done when we unite to work together.

Chair Hudson asked if there were any updates on action items for workgroup members. Member Ortiz that the Department’s Equity Group is working to develop infographics to share with the public regarding opportunity gaps. Member Ortiz further noted that while Connecting Kids did excellent work in connecting with students, connection was only the first step in closing the digital divide and there was still much work to be done.

5: SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jhone Ebert provided her update under agenda item 6.

6: INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION REGARDING THE FUTURE OF THE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION WORKGROUP IN ALIGNMENT WITH THE NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION’S EQUITY GOALS

Superintendent Ebert reflected on the January 6, 2021 Storming of the U.S. Capitol, and acknowledged that students and adults alike have concerns and questions; she encouraged all educators to provide opportunities for students to discuss, reflect, and critically engage with the events of January 6, providing students a safe place to learn and engage with subjects critical to participation in civic life. She expressed that we must not miss this opportunity to cultivate a future consisting of fair, free, and just communities. Superintendent Ebert reported that the Department had completed its final debriefing with the National Equity Project (NEP) and would continue to move forward in its equity work.

Superintendent Ebert reviewed the presentations and action items completed by the Department since the commencement of the Workgroup and highlighted the importance of a focused lens in order to achieve their goals. To begin a discussion regarding the future work of the Workgroup, Superintendent Ebert began a review of the goals and strategies of the [Statewide Plan for the Improvement of Pupils](#) (STIP).

Member Ortiz asked how many programs serving pre-K students receive Zoom funding; Superintendent Ebert responded that this information is developing due to budget adjustments. Member Ortiz expressed concern regarding weighted funding under the Public-Centered Funding Plan (PCFP), and that English learner (EL) funds, if decreased, may be reallocated away from pre-K programs. Superintendent Ebert noted that under the PCFP funding is driven per-pupil and creates flexibilities that categorical funding previously prohibited. Member Ortiz asked how to influence districts to spend dollars on pre-K programs and increase the number of children attending pre-K. Superintendent Ebert responded that the Department works closely with superintendents to ensure they have the information they need to make those choices.

Member Workman expressed that districts and boards of trustees face this difficulty each year, as funding fluctuates; he emphasized the importance of stable funding to support pre-K programs. Superintendent Ebert

supported finding new and diversified revenue sources to increase education funding. She further noted that there have been strong results out of funded programs and educators and administrators across the state work hard and do amazing work; however, the difficulty is consistently making funding decisions with an inadequate budget. Superintendent Ebert emphasized that the role of the Department and the Board is to develop clear and evidence-based policy and goals. In addition to that, the PCFP is an equity-driven formula which should assist in stabilizing programs.

Member Ortiz asked about the systemic efficiency of dual-credit course requests across the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE), and the role of workforce development in dual-credit courses. Felicia Gonzales, Deputy Superintendent of Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement noted that the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) required that the programs funded are determined to be high skill, high wage, and in demand. She further noted that the Department, in partnership with NSHE, had recently created a Dual Enrollment Task Force to address these very issues, including consistent high-quality programming throughout the State, streamlining the administrative process, and removing barriers and opportunity gaps for all students. Craig Statucki, Director of the Office of Career Readiness, Adult Learning, and Education Options has been key in this work, including providing strong support to rural districts, and will be presenting an overview of this work in a future Board meeting.

Chair Hudson asked about Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs that have a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) focus; specifically, she noted that there are opportunity gaps in access, enrollment, or completion of these programs. Chair Hudson recommended elementary and middle school programs which prepared students for these pathways, and Member Ortiz asked about opportunities for students to take courses at schools other than their own if their own school did not offer certain courses. Superintendent Ebert noted that the Nevada Learning Academy provides students with access to programs outside of their area, and supported policy which provided outreach to students and families about opportunities.

Member Alex Gallegos expressed the importance of giving students an “I can do this” mindset, rather than a “can I do this” mindset. He also supported outreach to students and families, informing and notifying them of opportunities. Member Gallegos noted that school counselors often do not have the time to provide one-on-one guidance to students and supported a resource which would assist in planning out their four-year high school path and beyond. Member Workman stated that law requires students to have a five-year plan in place and meet with counselors. In Lyon CSD, there is also an advisory period in all middle and high schools. However, he noted that the ratio of students to counselors was less than ideal, and he hoped for future legislation to address this. Member Workman reflected on research regarding collective teacher/staff efficacy and the importance of a good relationship between students and educators, which Chair Hudson further supported.

7: ACTION ITEMS FOR WORKGROUP MEMBERS

Member Ortiz moved for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Workgroup to proceed their work with a focus on CTE and STEM access for students as outlined in the equity strategies of STIP goals three and four; the Workgroup would look for potential policies or guidance that could be provided to districts to ensure a decrease in opportunity gaps and increase in access to STEM and CTE programming. Member Gallegos seconded. Motion passed.

8: FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Future agenda items included data regarding access, enrollment, and completion of CTE and STEM programming to analyze barriers and develop policy components to address their STIP goals and support students in their achievement, as well as additional analysis of the ACT as an assessment of college readiness.

9: PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

10: ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 3:21 PM.