

**NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NEVADA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETING OF THE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION WORKGROUP
NOVEMBER 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
Cathy McAdoo
Felicia Ortiz
Tamara Hudson

DEPARTMENT STAFF PRESENT

Jhone Ebert, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Felicia Gonzales, Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement
Dr. Jonathan Moore, Deputy Superintendent for Student Achievement
Jessica Todtman, Chief Strategy Officer
Terri Hendry, Public Information Officer
Dave Brancamp, Director, Office of Standards and Instructional Support
Mary Holsclaw, Education Programs Professional

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 OCTOBER 15, 2020 DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION WORKGROUP MINUTES

Member Felicia Ortiz moved to approve the minutes of the October 15, 2020 meeting of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Workgroup. Member Alex Gallegos seconded. Motion passed.

4: CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Hudson provided an update on the work of the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force and ConnectingKidsNV. At the time of her report, 3,077 students in Clark County had an expressed need for internet connectivity, and 1,732 for a device. The Family Support Center is working to knock on doors and track student attendance to determine that all students have successfully connected. The Family Support Center was scheduled to close mid-November but expanded its operation through December 11th to continue to meet the needs of students and families. Clark, Lyon, and Mineral County School Districts as well as the State Public Charter School Authority have reported outstanding need for connectivity and devices among their students. They are continuing to work with the Department and the Governor's Office of Science, Innovation, and Technology to meet the needs of every student.

Chair Hudson noted that an update on action items from Workgroup Members would be added as a regular item in her report to check in on progress and monitor the goals of the Workgroup as a platform to further diversity, equity, and inclusion leadership.

For her personal report on advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion, Chair Hudson noted that she has been reaching out and collaborating with special education teachers regarding how special education students are struggling under workloads and how they can innovate to best support students through distance learning. She has also physically gone to her students' homes to assist them in connecting to classes and providing wellness connections.

5: SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Jhone Ebert provided her update under agenda item 7.

6: INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION REGARDING THE STATEWIDE COMPETENCY BASED EDUCATION PILOT FROM ASSEMBLY BILL 110 (2017)

Dave Brancamp, Director, Office of Standards and Instructional Support and Mary Holsclaw, Educational Programs Professional, Office of Standards and Instructional Support conducted a PowerPoint presentation regarding [Competency-Based Education \(CBE\)](#).

Member Ortiz asked how students and families became aware of the CBE pilot program. Ms. Holsclaw responded that for Churchill County School District, a handbook on the program was provided; Cheyenne High School included the information in a newsletter. Member Ortiz asked if information about the program was offered in English and Spanish; Ms. Holsclaw responded that she would check with the administrators of the programs. Member Ortiz asked why the program was done with only math and English language arts, and not additional courses. Ms. Holsclaw responded that the focus was to work through core content areas.

Member Ortiz expressed concern that, without additional guardrails, the CBE program will become geared towards Gifted and Talented or highly proficient students – students who will also improve the rating of the school – and not be targeted towards other students who may benefit from the program. Responding to Member Ortiz, Ms. Holsclaw noted that materials developed by CBE programs, once verified to align with standards, are shareable across the State. Member Ortiz asked why a consultant was hired to develop Critical Concepts and Proficiency Scales for content areas, as it seemed that well-trained teachers would be able to evaluate proficiency. Dr. Jonathan Moore, Deputy Superintendent for Student

Achievement, clarified that competency-based instruction means that to determine the skills or knowledge a student, you assess them; to gain an accurate picture of that, you need to determine where they fall on a proficiency scale. To determine whether a group of students is ready to proceed, consistency is needed across assessments and how assessments are viewed to determine competency.

Member Ortiz confirmed that the Department has been working with the pilot programs to capture their work product for eventual sharing out across the State. Superintendent Ebert noted her support for contracts being drafted so that work product may be shared out and/or reused after the contract has concluded, and it is not made privileged information.

Responding to Member Ortiz, Director Brancamp clarified that the Blue Ribbon Commission for a Globally Prepared Nevada is reviewing and addressing policies which may be in statute and serving as a barrier to innovative programming. Member Ortiz asked if there was a potential for funding CBE. Superintendent Ebert responded that there will be a request for funding in future, but it is not yet clear how the pilot programs would be scaled and how much funding would be needed.

Member Gallegos asked if feedback was being received from students and educators participating in the pilot programs, and if it would be possible to have testimony from students participating in the programs during distance learning.

7: INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION REGARDING THE NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S WORK WITH THE NATIONAL EQUITY PROJECT

Superintendent Ebert provided an update regarding the diversity, equity, and inclusion survey disseminated to Department staff. It was a voluntary survey of 19 questions, all of which included "prefer not to answer" or "does not apply" options. Of the 100 staff who responded, 64% were female, 31% male, and 5% identified as non-binary, self-identification, or prefer not to answer. Fifteen percent of respondents identified as having a disability and 16% as veterans. Thirty-six percent of staff who responded to the survey are Spanish speakers, with an additional 10% of staff speaking another world language with fluency. Inclusive of Spanish and English, twelve languages are represented and spoken with fluency among the NDE respondents. Member Ortiz asked for n-sizes for the data to be included.

Moving to race and ethnicity data, Superintendent Ebert noted that the Department worked to keep the framing of the questions in alignment with national norms and provided broad categories for identification, while acknowledging that these could be disaggregated into much more specific categories.

Of the respondents,

- 10.8% identified as African American/Black;
- 4% identified as Asian;
- 76.5% identified as Caucasian;
- 4% identified as Native American Indian;
- 1% identified as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander;
- 11% percent of respondents identified as Hispanic or Latinx; and
- 9% identified as Other, which included self-identification, none of the above, and prefer not to answer responses.

On age, respondents reported as follows:

- 35% between the ages of 31-45;
- 35% between the ages of 46-55;
- 22% between the ages of 56-70; and
- 3% between the ages of 19-30.

On highest level of education, respondents reported as follows:

- 51% held a master's degree;
- 15% a doctoral degree;
- 11% a bachelor's degree;

- 14% with some college;
- 4% with an associate degree, and
- 3% with a high school diploma.

Member Ortiz noted that a large percentage of staff are approaching retirement age, which could lead to institutional knowledge being lost, and a very small demographic of younger employees, who should be included for active recruitment as they more closely represent the youth that the Department serves.

Superintendent Ebert reported that the Department worked with the National Equity Project (NEP), with all staff attending both trainings, with the exception of four employees who were unable to attend one of the two trainings. NEP conducted a needs assessment for the Department based on the outcomes of the learning sessions as well as targeted listening sessions. Superintendent Ebert reflected that an environment has been cultivated in the Department to ask “why,” discuss opportunity gaps, and, if we stumble, to stumble forward. The Department will also seek grant funding to hire an equity coordinator upon the recommendation of WestEd to assist the Department in their equity work.

Member Ortiz asked to hear feedback from staff regarding the training, and reported that from her attendance, the opportunity for staff to interact and build a culture was highly valuable. Director Brancamp reported that staff appreciated the opportunity to have conversations across offices. Terri Hendry, Public Information Officer, reported that over the course of the trainings, the conversations slowly became easier. Member Ortiz noted that Clark County School District had also contracted with NEP to conduct equity trainings across the district using funds garnered by the marijuana tax, and she was hopeful to see this training grow across all levels in the State.

8: ACTION ITEMS FOR WORKGROUP MEMBERS

Member Hudson emphasized the importance of Workgroup Members using their positions to move diversity, equity, and inclusion work forward with actionable items.

Member Ortiz asked for information to become advocates for the CBE programs, with a one-pager and talking points, so they could spread the word and share understanding.

9: FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS

Member Ortiz asked for updated information regarding the Department’s demographic survey. Member Gallegos asked for testimony from students participating in the competency-based learning program. Member McAdoo requested continued updates regarding the work of the Blue Ribbon Commission.

10: PUBLIC COMMENT #2

No public comment.

11: ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 3:29 P.M.