

**NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
COMMISSION ON INNOVATION AND EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION  
JANUARY 18, 2024  
9:00 AM**

<b>Office</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Meeting</b>
Southwest Career and Technical Academy	7050 W. Shelbourne Ave	Las Vegas	Ballroom Bldg. B

**SUMMARY MINUTES OF COMMISSION ON INNOVATION AND EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION MEETING**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Elysia Byrd, Teacher Strategist, John F. Miller School, Clark County School District  
Patty Charlton, Chancellor, Nevada System of Higher Education  
Teresa Dastrup, President, Elko County School District School Board  
Jhone Ebert, Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Nevada  
Dr. Mariluz Garcia, Commissioner, Washoe County  
Tim Hughes, Nevada State Board of Education  
Paul Johnson, Chief Financial Officer, White Pine County School District  
Dr. Gregory Koenig, Nevada State Assembly  
Marilyn Dondero Loop, Nevada State Senate  
Kali Fox Miller, Nevada PTA President  
Erica Mosca, Nevada State Assembly  
Anthony Nunez, Principal, Cheyenne High School, Clark County School District  
Sean Parker, Executive Director, Teach for America  
Tina Quigley, President and CEO, Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance  
Malinda Riemersma, Teacher, Sonoma Heights Elementary School, Humboldt County School District  
Nicole Rourke, Director of Government and Public Affairs, City of Henderson  
Maite Salazar, Owner and Co-Founder, 3F Initiatives LLC  
Amy Stephenson, Director for the Governor's Finance Office, State of Nevada  
Dr. Angie Taylor, Nevada State Assembly  
Dr. Robin Titus, Nevada State Senate  
Joyce Woodhouse, Commission on School Funding Member  
Adam Young, Superintendent, White Pine County School District  
Peter Zierhut, Vice President, Haas Automation, Inc.

**MEMBERS EXCUSED:**

Roberta Lange, Nevada State Senate

**1. CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL**

Superintendent Ebert called the meeting to order at 9:16 A.M. on Thursday, January 18 and asked Felicia Gonzales to perform roll call. Senior Deputy Attorney General David Gardner and members from the NDE team, Lisa Ford and Felicia Gonzales, were recognized as attendants of the meeting. Alexis Walsh, a representative of the Nevada Youth Legislature, was also present.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT #1**

There were no public comments provided.

### **3. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS, AND ELECTION OF CHAIR** (*Information, Discussion, and Possible Action*)

- Jhone M. Ebert, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Nevada Department of Education

Superintendent Ebert welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the meeting at the Southwest Career and Technical Academy. Felicia Gonzales was recognized as the first principal of the school and for her diligence in ensuring the school had the proper tools and equipment required to provide a complete education for attending students. Superintendent Ebert acknowledged Senator Dondero Loop in attendance as one of the sponsors of Senate Bill 425 that assisted in creating this commission and continued to read the first sentence of the legislation. Each member was directed to provide a brief introduction of themselves. Superintendent Ebert requested nominations for the Chair and Vice Chair of the Commission on Innovation and Excellence. Senator Dondero Loop nominated Tina Quigley as the Chair and Joyce Woodhouse as the Vice Chair. They received unanimous votes from all members and officially accepted the positions.

### **4. HOW THE WORLD IS CHANGING FOR OUR YOUTH** (*Information/Discussion*)

The Commission will hear a presentation regarding how the world is changing for our youth.

- Dr. Vicki Phillips, Chief Executive Office, National Center on Education and the Economy

Superintendent Ebert introduced Dr. Vicki Phillips, Chief Executive Officer, National Center on Education and the Economy who presented on how the world is changing for our youth.

Janice Case opened the presentation by explaining how being responsible, being respectful, and being engaged is incorporated into every commission meeting. Members were asked to briefly discuss what this means to each of them amongst each other. Key points discussed were shared with the group. Members relayed how important these rules are and the impact they will have on future meetings. Dr. Vicki Phillips was introduced to continue the presentation. Dr. Phillips explained how each educator experiences a certain point in their career where someone or something has inspired them to go above and beyond what they expected. The importance of education throughout a student's life was discussed and the impact it has on their lives and their communities. Dr. Phillips spoke about the impact this commission will make in providing innovations in education that can shape the forever changing future of so many lives. This commission is a diverse group of members from different departments that can provide insight to leaders and policy makers and anticipate future changes that are needed in the evolution of education. Important innovations and changes made during the lives of members when they were young were examined. Dr. Phillips discussed how young people are learning today through social media and the internet. Only 6% of Gen Z are dropping out of high school and the majority are attending college or seeking a higher form of education. Students need to be thought of more as allies than just beneficiaries of this innovation process. A brief discussion about this process was conducted amongst members. Dr. Phillips went on to explain that the younger generation wants to be involved in their education and contribute to the process of change. They are interested in inter-generational collaboration and seek out the guidance and leadership of their elders. A few moments were given for members to discuss this information amongst themselves. Members voiced their surprise that young people are seeking out inter-generational collaboration and are not as self-absorbed as previously thought. Statistics of job availability and decline were provided by Dr. Phillips and the different skills current employers are seeking were discussed. Four important areas of the outcome of student education were reviewed: student mastery, habits of learning and well-being, contemporary skills, and community skills. Janice Case encouraged discussion of the skills required by employers today and how students can acquire them. Concerns were discussed about how creative and analytical thinking are not something that can be taught by teachers but are internal to each student and activities need to be created to help them improve these skills.

### **5. INTRODUCTION ON INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS** (*Information/Discussion*)

The Commission will hear a presentation regarding the introduction of international comparisons.

- Nathan Driskell, Chief Policy Officer, National Center on Education and the Economy

Janice Case, standing in for Nathan Driskell, stressed the importance of this commission to consider the factors that impact students' lives globally and not just throughout the State. Information was provided on where the United States stands in the context of student education and where Nevada stands compared to other states. The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) was reviewed and how it tests fifteen-year-old students on what they know and how they apply what they know. Data was provided indicating how the US is one of the lower performing countries in the world and is outranked by many other countries in different areas. A brief discussion ensued on how members perceive these scores and what they mean to them. Points were made on how the US is too far behind higher ranking countries and that we have much to learn from these systems while understanding that their contexts are different so we cannot simply copy/paste their systems. Instead, our work is to benchmark our current NV system against these systems to better understand the most effective, efficient path forward. This is the most efficient way to move forward. Janice Case mentioned commission members and reports that are available as research for future system changes.

## **6. EMERGING INSIGHTS FROM HIGH PERFORMING SYSTEMS: PART I** *(Information/Discussion)*

The Commission will hear a presentation regarding the emerging insights from high performing systems, part one.

- Nathan Driskell, Chief Policy Officer, National Center on Education and the Economy
- Janice Case, Regional Director West, National Center on Education and the Economy

Janice Case continued the presentation with an assessment of education in the United States and Nevada's position. The National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) is an exam administered to 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. The NAEP gives a narrower perspective and does not test analytical skills like the PISA. Nevada's results were shown to members and a brief discussion amongst members ensued. Members commented that they were pleasantly surprised that Nevada was average on the scale. Comments were also made that average should not be the goal. More slides were presented with results of the NAEP and members were given ten minutes to discuss them. Reflections were provided on viewing the data on their own versus the data being presented on slides. Concerns were voiced about the higher performance of Asian-Pacific Islanders compared to other students. Questions were also raised about the documentation of race on the NAEP and how they may not be as accurate as perceived. Students are given specific options to choose from and they may not entirely reflect their background. Janice Case had members discuss the implications of these performance scores on the education of students in Nevada. Data was mentioned that 31% of 4<sup>th</sup> graders have stated that they do not read at all outside of school. Janice Case remarked on the importance of motivating these students to continue learning on their own.

Superintendent Ebert announced that lunch would be served by students and had them introduce themselves.

## **7. EMERGING INSIGHTS FROM HIGH PERFORMING SYSTEMS: PART 2** *(Information/Discussion)*

The Commission will hear a presentation regarding the emerging insights from high performing systems, part two.

- Nathan Driskell, Chief Policy Officer, National Center on Education and the Economy
- Janice Case, Regional Director West, National Center on Education and the Economy

Janice Case mentioned some comments that were made during the lunch break. Data was presented on employers in Nevada that have the most employees receiving Medicaid and other government assistance. An important point was noted that although learning about the impacts of education globally is valuable, the focus should be on the education that is being provided within the state and down to the classroom level. A video on international benchmarks was presented. The presenter from Madera, California shared that his team questioned at first whether they could implement a system like those found in high

performing countries around the world. Coming from such a small community as Madera, the presenter stated that many of their students are struggling with obstacles that prevent them from performing higher. They have implemented some of the international systems and have begun to expect more from their students in hopes of becoming a role model for other school districts. Janice Case continued by discussing some policy areas of top performing states and countries, stressing the importance of studying these policies with the intention of not copying but learning from them. The three systems to be discussed were proficient based learning, world class teaching and learning, and aligned and coherent governments. A common thread among these systems is proficiency-based learning which consists of reaching specific goals in a student's own time and moving on when they are ready. Members briefly discussed how this system may already be implemented in our schools or how it could be in the future. Questions were asked about how these systems would be implemented and the training that would need to be provided to teachers to ensure that no child is left behind. Should children be measured on certain benchmarks that need to be mastered in each grade or should each child be expected to reach their own level of potential and how can that be measured? Concerns on how teachers can spend the individual time with students that this system would require was mentioned and Janice Case replied that there are examples of proficiency-based learning systems in which students succeed with minimal assistance. Some examples of how proficiency-based learning is being implemented in different states were provided. The second system of teaching and learning which places learners at the center was discussed. The four core elements of this system are rigorous teacher preparation, a continuation of leadership roles, organized teacher collaboration, and school leaders that have the capacity to include all teachers. Recognition that this system is already being implemented to some degree in certain Clark County Schools was discussed and the difficulty of sharing among the fifth largest school district in the nation. Superintendent Ebert made the comment that, from her experience of visiting different schools throughout the district, community members play a vital role in teaching our students important life and job skills that they can utilize in the future. Coherent and aligned governments were discussed and what conditions must be created in every classroom, school, and district to ensure student success. Further discussion was held about the importance of including this system with all elements when considering changes and looking ahead to how these changes can be implemented.

## **8. REFLECTIONS AND NEXT STEPS** (*Information/Discussion, and Possible Action*)

- National Center on Education and the Economy

Members chose a partner to discuss the key points mentioned during the meeting, systems that have already been implemented in Nevada schools, and points that can help support the work of this commission.

The presentation was continued with an overview of discussions and how they can be used to make future recommendations. Superintendent Ebert discussed the teachers and leaders counsel and how they are evaluated. Changes to policies and regulations that have been in effect for over fifty years have been mandated and reevaluated to fit the current needs of the State of Nevada. Superintendent Ebert spoke about the importance of all members to voice their concerns.

Questions were presented to members about the meeting, and they were given the opportunity to post their reactions. Dr. Phillips spoke about the commissions that she has been able to participate in and closed with a video of how students are playing a part in changing their future and their input.

## **9. PUBLIC COMMENT #2**

Superintendent Ebert asked if there were any public comments. None were provided.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

Superintendent Ebert motioned for the meeting to be adjourned and it was seconded at 2:30 P.M.