

# Nevada Department of Education

Nevada Commission on Mentoring

Friday, December 15, 2023

2:00 PM

Office	Mode	Platform
Department of Education	Teleconference/Livestream	Zoom

## SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE COMMISSION MEETING

### COMMISSION MEMBER PRESENT

Karl Catarata, Chair

Katie Membreno, Vice Chair

Laura Davidson

Michael Maxwell

Brigid Duffy

Andres Estrada

### COMMISSION MEMBER ABSENT

Sebastian Cardenas

Raja Mourey

Michael Flores

### DEPARTMENT STAFF PRESENT

Sarah Thomas, NDE Staff

Rose Cota, NDE Staff

### 1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance, and Land Acknowledgement:

Vice Chair Membreno called the meeting to order on Friday, December 15, 2023 at 2:07 p.m.

Rose Cota, conducted a roll call. **Quorum was established** (6 Members present).

Chair Karl Catarata led the Commission in the pledge of allegiance and acknowledged the land.

### 2. Public Comment

Chair Karl Catarata opened the floor to public comment. There was no public comment.

### 3. Approval of Flexible Agenda

The Commission **acquired quorum** and therefore could vote on approval for any objective in this meeting.

**Motion:** Approval of a flexible agenda  
**By:** Karl Catarata  
**Second:** Brigid Duffy  
**Vote:** Passed unanimously

#### **4. Welcome and Introduction (Mission Statement)**

Vice Chair Membreno thanked everyone for attending today's meeting and requested that the Commission move forward with the items on the agenda.

#### **5. Chair's Report:**

Chair Catarata informed the Committee that the members of the grant subcommittee had arrived on decisions for the grant funding, and indicated that he looks forward to the input of the rest of the Commission regarding these approvals.

#### **6. NCOM Development updates:**

##### **a. Approval of NCOM subcommittee recommendations for FY 24-25 NCOM grant fund allocations and decisions.**

Laura Davidson informed the Commission that this year's grant had 23 applicants with a total request of \$250,908, and noted her belief that the changes the Commission made to the application as well as the grant workshops had made a difference in the quality and level of detail in the received applications.

The following grant applications were granted:

- Board of Regents - Desert Research Institute in the amount of \$5,000
- UNLV - Oganessian in the amount of \$5,000
- La Voz - Latino Law Student Association in the amount of \$4,800
- Las Vegas Clark County Library in the amount of \$3,200
- Board of Regents - Nevada Afterschool Network in the amount of \$2,500
- Code Switch Restorative Justice for Girls in the amount of \$2,500
- UNLV - Tuman in the amount of \$1,000
- Boys and Girls Club - Western Nevada in the amount of \$500
- Incline Education Fund in the amount of \$500

Chair Catarata explained that some organizations were not eligible as they were a government agency, some needed more detail regarding costs, some needed more detail regarding the purpose and usage of the funds, some were ineligible as they were for-profit, some were unclear on details or terms and conditions, some were not serving the

disproportionately impacted youth, and some needed more details regarding camps and training camps and training usage for the funds.

Brigid Duffy requested more information regarding the programs of the top two scorers.

Chair Catarata explained that Dr. Oganessian at UNLV runs a program at the Office of Undergraduate Research that supports youth mentorship through peer mentorship programming, first year research experience (FYRE), and a research education program (REP) for high school students. Chair Catarata further indicated that this group did receive a grant last year, and exceeded expectations by hosting a mentor to mentee program at UNLV along with a symposium with everyone's printed research. The Chair explained that he and the Vice Chair had toured this program and were able to see 60 or 70 research posters that resulted from last year's grant funding.

Dr. Davidson explained that the Desert Research Institute is an organization in Northern Nevada who will use their funds for a 10-week STEM outreach to at-risk, underserved youth, and will provide scientific mentorship and engagement activities.

Chair Catarata indicated the need for the Commission to have more money for funding, noting that this is a perfect opportunity for Commissioners to showcase the grant spreadsheet to the legislators as it clearly indicates the need in the community versus the amount the Commission currently has to grant to these organizations. Chair Catarata discussed beginning conversations at the next NCOM meeting regarding how to increase this amount.

**Motion:** To approve the NCOM Subcommittee's recommendations for the grant funding.  
**By:** Karl Catarata  
**Second:** Michael Maxwell  
**Vote:** Passed unanimously

Chair Catarata congratulated the grantees and thanked the organizations who applied. The Chair encouraged all to apply again in the next grant cycle as well as to attend the grant workshops provided by NCOM.

Michael Maxwell noted the lack of grassroots, smaller organization applications and discussed the need to engage with smaller organizations not only to encourage them to apply, but potentially help them with the grant process.

Chair Catarata concurred and discussed the need to have the conversations regarding what outreach can be done on the part of the Commission prior to the next grant process so as to increase the number of smaller organization applications.

Laura Davidson discussed the fact that the scoring process may weight in some ways that may not encourage those without prior grant process to apply. As such, Dr. Davidson suggested the idea of setting aside some portion of money for first-time grant applicants so as to eliminate that potential barrier. In addition, Dr. Davidson indicated the possibility of specifically gearing the next funding cycle towards reaching some of the smaller organizations that the current rubric may not weight as heavily so as to try and build some of the capacity for the smaller grassroots organizations.

Michael Maxwell concurred, noting that smaller organizations may not know how to be as successful with the grant process and as such, may be removing themselves from a process they have not yet even begun. Dr. Maxwell suggested getting the word out many months prior to the application process as well as the possibility of a special workshop for specifically these types of organizations.

Brigid Duffy concurred, noting the importance of the Commission reaching out to these organizations, as well as the need to determine the best way for Commissioners to do so. Commissioner Duffy further suggested potentially granting funds to relatively new organizations just starting out so as to balance out the funding among different types of organizations.

Chair Catarata concurred and discussed the need to think through a one or two-day summit so as to better reach these smaller organizations as well as to educate the community about NCOM, as well as to continue to ask the legislature for more money to grant out to more organizations. The Chair suggested adding effective strategies to reach smaller organizations as an agenda item for the next NCOM meeting.

Michael Maxwell concurred that the summit would be a good way to reach some of these organizations, and reminded the Commission that when Tyrone Thompson first started NCOM, one of the objectives included empowering and teaching small organizations to successfully be able to do things like grant applications.

## **7. Agenda Item Considerations**

### **a. NCOM Secretary**

Chair Catarata informed the Commission of the need for a secretary and requested that Rose Cota provide more detail.

Rose Cota, NDE, indicated that the Commissioners would need to come to an agreement as to who could be recommended for this position, including perhaps someone currently serving as Commissioner, as well as what responsibilities would need to go to the secretary.

Chair Catarata indicated his belief that the Commission is not currently in a place to recommend a secretary, with the exception of a volunteer from within the Commissioners themselves, of which there were none. The Chair acknowledged the need for this position to

be filled and requested that it remain as an agenda item consideration for the next meeting.

Chair Catarata requested that discussion on outreach to grassroots organizations for upcoming NCOM cycle be added as agenda item for the next NCOM meeting.

#### **8. Public Comment #2**

Chair Catarata opened the floor to public comments. There was no public comment.

#### **9. Adjournment**

Chair Catarata adjourned the December 15, 2023 NCOM meeting at 2:39 pm.