

**NEVADA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION  
NEVADA STATE BOARD FOR CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION**

**Friday, January 22, 2010**

Department of Education  
Board Conference Room  
700 East Fifth Street  
Carson City, Nevada

And

Department of Education  
9890 South Maryland  
Second Floor Conference Room  
Las Vegas, Nevada

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING**  
**(Video Conferenced)**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

**In Las Vegas:**

Anthony Ruggiero, President  
Jan Biggerstaff, Member  
Gloria Bonaventure, Member  
Willia Chaney, Member  
Charlotte Hill, Member  
Christopher Wallace, Member  
Craig Wilkinson, Member  
Zhan Okuda-Lim, Student Representative

**In Carson City:**

Dr. Cliff Ferry, Member  
Dave Cook, Member  
Ken McKenna, Member (Absent)

**DEPARTMENT STAFF PRESENT:**

**In Las Vegas:**

Dr. Keith Rheault, Superintendent of Public Instruction

**In Carson City:**

Jim Wells, Deputy Superintendent, Administrative and Fiscal Services  
Gloria Dopf, Deputy Superintendent, Instructional, Research and Evaluative Services

Lori Johnson, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent of Public Instruction  
Karen Johansen, Administrative Assistant to the State Board of Education  
Carol Crothers, Director, Office of Assessment, Program Accountability, and Curriculum  
Robinette Bacon, School Health Program Consultant, Office of Child Nutrition and School Health  
Donnell Barton, Director, Office of Child Nutrition and School Health  
Kim Vidoni, Educational Technology Coordinator  
Christina Borino, Grants Analyst  
Tor Loring, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) Consultant

**LEGAL STAFF PRESENT:**

**In Carson City:**

Dr. James E. Irvin, Senior Deputy Attorney General

**AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE:**

**In Las Vegas:**

Deb Hegna, Clark County School District  
Nicole Rourke, Clark County School District  
Loretta Assay, Clark County School District  
Andre Yates, Clark County School District  
Annie Amoia, Clark County School District  
Brenda Nielsen, Clark County School District

**In Carson City:**

Julia Spaulding, Nevada State Health Division  
Sandi Noffsing, Nevada State Health Division  
Katherine Loudon, Washoe County School District  
Eugene Paslov  
Mary Petersen

**CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL; PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE; APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

President Ruggiero called the meeting to order at 8:24 a.m., with attendance as reflected above. Member Cook arrived at 8:40 a.m.

**Member Hill moved to approve a flexible agenda. Member Wallace seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

**Presidents Report**

President Ruggiero reported on the ACR 2 committee meeting he attended Thursday, January 21, 2010. He said Mindy Martini, Legislative Research Division, Senior Research Analyst, gave a beneficial presentation. The ACR 2 Committee discussed the Commission on Academic Standards, the Commission on Educational Technology and the Regional Training Programs for Professional Development of Teachers, Administrators, and the Statewide Council for the Coordination of the Regional Training Programs (RPDP's). Member Biggerstaff stated she appreciated Senator William Raggio's presentation on the historical background of the Nevada State Board of Education.

Dr. Keith Rheault said the ACR 2 Committee distributed a page with eight questions to all committees and councils that would be testifying. He suggested the Board be prepared with specific responses to those questions during their agenda item at the next meeting.

### **Superintendent's Report**

- Dr. Rheault reported on the Board member travel budget. He stated the Board has used less than half the budget for in-state travel and over half the budget for out-of-state travel.
- Dr. Rheault provided a handout for his report on the Common Core Standards Initiative. He said this was a voluntary effort led by the National Governors Association (NGA), and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), of which he is a member. Dr. Rheault explained that over the years discussions have occurred about a need for a common understanding of what is expected in English and Math. He stated Nevada has agreed to work towards participating in the development of Common Core Standards, and then decide as a State if we want to accept the standards. Forty-eight states have signed on to look at the Common Core Standards, Alaska and Texas have not. Adopting the standards is voluntary and states may choose to include additional state standards beyond the common core. He added the common core package must be adopted in whole with the option of states adding up to 15% more standards, for Race to the Top.

In response to Member Biggerstaff's question regarding who gives authority when the permanent standards are signed off, Dr. Rheault responded that the Academic Standards Council is the only body that has authority to revise or adopt English and Math standards. The standards then come to the Board to be put into regulations replacing old standards. If the Board has concerns, they can send them back the Academic Standards Council and advise what they want changed. The Academic Standards Council must meet and look at the Board's concerns, but they do not have to change the standards.

Dr. Rheault described what the common core standards would look like:

- Fewer, clearer and higher standards
- Articulate to parents, teachers and the general public expectations for what students will know and be able to do, grade by grade, and when they graduate from high school
- Internationally benchmarked
- Research and evidence based
- Ready for states to adopt

Dr. Rheault detailed why this is important:

- Currently, every state has its own set of academic standards, meaning public education students in each state are learning to different levels
- This initiative will allow equal access to an excellent education
- All students must be prepared to compete with not only their American peers in the next state, but with students from around the world
- 48 states and 3 territories have signed on to the Common Core State Standards Initiative led by the NGA Center and CCSSO
- This initiative will potentially affect 43.5 million students, which is about 87% of the student population.

Dr. Rheault reviewed why Common Core State Standards are good for states:

- Allows states to align curricula to internationally benchmarked standards
- Allows states to ensure professional development for educator is based on best practices
- Creates the opportunity for America to compete for high-wage, high-skill jobs in a knowledge-based economy
- Allows for the development of a common assessment
- Gives states the opportunity to compare and evaluate policies that affect student achievement across states
- Creates potential economies of scale around areas such as curriculum development and assessment

Dr. Rheault further described what would happen after the Common Core Standards are developed. If the standards are available in February, he stated he would bring them forward for discussion to the next Academics Standards Council meeting. The standards will be distributed to all the school districts and they will be available for comments, concerns and support at [www.nga.org](http://www.nga.org) or [www.ccsso.org](http://www.ccsso.org).

Member Chaney asked if they would be required to change textbooks if the standards are not adopted.

Dr. Rheault replied that if the Common Core Standards are not accepted and adopted, Nevada would not be competitive in Race to the Top, but little else would be affected.

Discussion continued with the Board and Dr. Rheault about adopting the Common Core Standards.

- Dr. Rheault suggested an agenda item for the March 18-19, 2010, board meeting to discuss plans for Race To The Top and the requirements to apply for the program. A detailed report will be presented with a timeline.

### **Approval of Consent Agenda**

#### **A. Approval of Minutes of December 3-4, 2009 Meeting**

#### **B. Approval of the awarding of 1.09 gifted and talented discretionary units to the Clark County School District, 1.0 unit to the Pershing County School District, and 1.0 unit to the Washoe County School District.**

Member Ferry commented he had minor punctuation corrections and typos to submit.

Dr. Rheault added he received a technical change from Student Representative Zhan Okuda-Lim and the wording would be corrected.

Member Biggerstaff inquired about the age group for the application for the Gifted and Talented.

Gloria Dopf, Deputy Superintendent, Instructional, Research and Evaluative Services, stated she would respond for Rorie Fitzpatrick, Director, Special Education, Elementary & Secondary Education & School Improvement Programs who was unable to attend the meeting. According to state code, gifted and talented students can be four years old through high school age. The use of

these units is not limited to an age group; rather it is at the discretion of the districts to decide on the gifted and talented students.

President Ruggiero asked Ms. Dopf if there is a specific age group on the application from the Clark County School District.

Nicole Rourke, Clark County School District, stated the Clark County School District's Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program serves grades 3-5. She added she thought that was the intent but was not completely familiar with the materials submitted.

**Member Hill moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Member Wallace seconded the motion. The motion carried.**

### **ACR 2 recommendations including cost savings being sent to ACR 2 Committee**

President Ruggiero stated since the Board adopted their position regarding Governance, the Superintendent, Charter Schools and the State Board of Education composition, he has maintained the Board's position and assumed the Board members have done the same. He spoke about the final draft of the Board's recommendations adding their position was clear, concise and to the point. He said he signed off on the recommendations then they were sent to the ACR 2 Committee.

Dr. Rheault said a packet with the Board's recommendations was also sent to the Governor's office.

President Ruggiero explained that cost savings were added and delineated for the commissions and councils in the final draft.

Member Chaney asked if the Board does not get what they are asking for, could they negotiate.

President Ruggiero replied that negotiations would not take place during the ACR 2 meetings; rather the ACR 2 Committee will make recommendations to the 2011 Legislature. He added when the Board learns what the recommendations are, they can develop a position, and then lobby the legislators in their districts.

### **Nevada 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Middle and High School Survey Summary Data**

Robinette Bacon, School Health Education Coordinator, and Donnell Barton, Director, Office of Child Nutrition and School Health presented the Nevada 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Middle and High School Survey Summary Data results. Ms. Bacon gave a brief historical framework of the survey. She explained that in the spring of 2009 the Nevada Department of Education conducted its ninth statewide administration of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). The United States Center for Disease Control Surveillance System (CDC) uses the epidemiological surveillance system to measure the prevalence of priority health safety behaviors that put youth at risk for significant health and social problems, and to monitor the progress towards achieving the relevant National Health Objectives for 2010. Ms. Bacon stated the 2009 survey provides us with the first comparison document to look at the difference between 2007 and 2009.

Ms. Bacon explained that survey administration procedures are utilized to protect the privacy and confidentiality, of all participating students, and added student participation is voluntary with parental permission given prior to the survey administration. Ms. Bacon remarked that Nevada does a survey

within the survey and draws a district sample so the districts can compare the students in their school district against the statewide and national data.

Ms. Bacon discussed the results of the survey sample and stated Nevada had 2,951 students, grades 9-12, in 82 public schools that were selected for the 99 item multiple-choice YRBS. The school response rate was 91 percent, the student response rate was 71 percent and the overall response rate was 64 percent. She added the YRBS for grades 6-8 was completed by 2,467 students in 99 middle schools in Nevada during the spring of 2009. The school response rate was 89 percent, the student response rate was 76 percent, and the overall response rate was 68 percent.

Ms. Bacon explained the questions that are asked of students have been developed by representatives from state and local departments of education and health, federal agencies, national education and health organizations, and community based non-profit organizations. The YRBS is designed to focus on behaviors that are the leading causes of morbidity and mortality among youth and to access how these behaviors change over time.

Member Biggerstaff commented there was an increase in suicide, and information on suicide was eliminated in the standards and asked if there was a correlation.

Ms. Bacon stated the word "suicide" was eliminated in an effort to decrease the use of buzzwords that might date the document. Behavior that would cause harm to one's self is in the standard for grades 9-12.

Member Biggerstaff expressed concern about the increased use of illegal drugs at schools and asked if it was being discussed in health classes.

Ms. Bacon responded this is a case of accountability of local school boards and trustees to establish policies at their local level.

In response to Member Biggerstaff's question about the decreased use of condoms, Ms. Bacon responded that was being discussed in health classes along with sexually transmitted diseases.

President Ruggiero expressed concern about the way questions regarding timeframes of weapon use and violence were different in the 2007 and the 2009 survey.

Ms. Bacon responded that when a site-specific question is added, they must choose from previously worded questions from lists that were previously validated. When a site-specific question is added, it is worded by the CDC through their pilot studies on the wording of those questions. She said they are hampered by changing the wording of the questions because then they would not have the comparable data with the nation.

In response to Member Chaney's question as to whether students in grades 6 - 8 have assistance in filling out the survey, Ms. Bacon replied the administrators might read a question, however; they are not allowed to explain the question.

Member Biggerstaff said she appreciated all the effort that went into this excellent resource.

Ms. Bacon replied this data driven approach provides information why it is difficult for today's youth to achieve academic successes when faced with pervasive health behaviors and feelings of depression.

Katherine Loudon, Administrator, Washoe County School District (WCSD), said that their school district would be sharing the information with administrators and parents. Superintendent Morrison has issued a press release in response to their district specific data.

Julia Spaulding, HIV/AIDS Surveillance Coordinator for Nevada State Health Division, stated she worked closely with Ms. Bacon on the survey to get a full picture of student sexual health in Nevada. Ms. Bacon presents the YRBS data to the State Aids Advisory Task Force, which helps direct prevention activities.

Sandra Nottsinger, STD Prevention and Control Program Coordinator at Nevada State Health Division, said there has been a significant increase of 40 percent between 2005 and 2007 in STD's among youth under the age of 19. She added statewide data is collected on risk, and the YRBS gives supplemental data on where to focus efforts which is helpful for the HIV prevention plan.

President Ruggiero inquired if the data is shared with the Southern Nevada Health District.

Ms. Bacon replied, yes, the information is provided to the three health districts, and is available on their website.

President Ruggiero thanked Ms. Barton and Ms. Bacon for the presentation and recessed the meeting for a 10-minute break.

### **WORKSHOP to Solicit Comments on Proposed Amendments to NAC 389; Nevada Computer and Technology Standards.**

President Ruggiero opened the workshop at 10:36 a.m. There were five individuals in attendance in Carson City and six individuals in attendance in Las Vegas.

Kim Vidoni, Educational Technology Coordinator said the Computer and Technology Standards revision committee held its first meeting in September 2008 and began revising the Educational Technology plan at that time. Ms. Vidoni thanked Dr. Don Knezek and Lynn Nolan, International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) who were a great help in leading the efforts in Nevada. They met frequently through March 2009 through Centra, an online meeting application that Clark County School District allowed them to use. The revision committee was comprised of teachers, students, district representatives, business representatives, parents, RPDP representatives, NSHE representatives, NDE representatives, members of the Commission on Educational Technology and high-ranking officers of ISTE.

Ms. Vidoni said in April 2009, a draft of the standards was distributed for public comment resulting in suggestions that were incorporated. She clarified that technology integration is the incorporation of technology tools into classroom instruction to facilitate student learning. Ms. Vidoni continued that research suggests the teaching of technology skills in isolation from meaningful content is not as effective as using technology tools to facilitate learning in subject area content.

Ms. Vidoni stated the standards are based on the National Educational Technology Standards for Students (NETS-S) put forth by ISTE. The revision committee also took into account the provisions of SB 163 passed by the 2009 Legislature that requires the issue of cyber safety and cyber bullying be addressed in the standards.

Ms. Vidoni further stated that once the standards are approved, they would be distributed to the districts. Clark County School District received a federal grant to align the standards to the existing content area standards to produce a document will be shared with the other districts in the state.

President Ruggiero commented that when he reviewed the changes he found the terms in the edited version to be clear and simple.

Ms. Vidoni replied that because technology changes so rapidly they refrained from using specific terms, as it dates the document, and this document needs to stand for approximately seven years.

Loretta Assay, Clark County School District, commented that as a review committee they had to be careful that the document was not dated, and would apply to whatever comes down the road in two years. In addition, the wording was modeled on national and international standards.

Member Ferry questioned the fact that the standards are not designed for a particular class and asked how teachers will be convinced to use the standards.

Ms. Vidoni responded that participation is optional because there is limited funding. She added there are Professional Development Programs that focus on helping teachers to integrate technology into their programs.

In response to Student Representative Zhan Okuda-Lim's question, Ms. Vidoni clarified; the standards are not specific to computer technology classes.

There being no public comment, President Ruggiero closed the workshop at 10: 57 a.m.

### **Summary of the Annual Submission of the 2009 District Improvement Plans**

Gloria Dopf, Deputy Superintendent, Instructional Research and Evaluative Services, explained the 2009 District Improvement Plan (DIP) charts provided as a handout. She highlighted the summary of activities identified for the seventeen school district plans. These plans will be incorporated into the State Improvement Plan (STIP) due December 15 of each year.

President Ruggiero asked for clarification regarding the (STIP) and the DIP being done independently.

Ms. Dopf replied that the STIP data for December is based on the analysis of the previous year's DIP.

In response to Member Ferry's inquiry if the information goes to the RPDP's, Ms Dopf responded the information does go to the RPDP's.

## **Approval of Request for Variance from Class Size Reduction Requirements, 2009-2010 School Year**

Dr. Rheault provided an overview and background information on the state requirements for Class Size Reduction. He reviewed the request for variances and his recommendation was to approve the variances as listed. Dr. Rheault commented on Governor Gibbon's education reform plan to eliminate mandatory class size requirement, then later the Governor clarified his plan was to eliminate the statutory requirement and allow school district use the funds at their discretion. If the state funding was cut, 2,051 teaching positions could be eliminated.

President Ruggiero asked what would happen if the Board did not approve the variance request. Dr. Rheault answered over the years there have only been two variance requests rejected. He said if you do not approve the variances, you are telling the school districts you do not approve their variances and they will need to meet within the state required ratio. The districts could either appeal the decision for financial reason then have an official hearing, or they could hire a teacher to meet the ratio. Dr. Rheault added the school districts are already struggling financially.

In response to Member Biggerstaff's question whether districts may apply for alternative class size reduction requirements, Dr. Rheault replied every district except Clark County and Washoe County are eligible due to population. She asked if Empowerment Schools must follow the class size reduction requirements. Dr. Rheault said the totals were district wide, so an individual school may or may not follow the requirements.

Discussion continued with the Board.

President Ruggiero asked if a member from the Clark County School District would explain why the variance request is required and how it is affecting the district.

Nicole Rourke, Clark County School District (CCSD), said the district's current allocation is \$109 million and with the requested variance, they will still spend approximately \$15 million dollars additionally from the general fund to maintain those ratios. She added last year Clark County had a \$115 million allocation and spent an additional \$15 million. Without the variance, it would cost CCSD over \$138 million.

**Member Ferry moved the board accept the request for variance for all the school districts that have requested it. The motion was seconded by Member Biggerstaff. The motion carried.**

### **Election of President /Officers for 2010**

- **President - Member Wilkinson nominated Member Wallace as the 2010 Nevada State Board of Education President.**
- **Member Cook nominated President Ruggiero as the 2010 Nevada State Board of Education President.**

Member Chaney asked the nominees to give a statement of what they can bring to the Board as President.

Member Wallace responded he has discussed board issues with Legislators and has a good rapport with the Legislators in both the Assembly and Senate. He said Legislators have been receptive to his discussions on behalf of the Board regarding what has been put forth as a unanimous and cohesive opinion. Member Wallace further stated he has the energy, the desire and the will to move forward, especially with the ACR 2 Committee recommendations to streamline the governance structure making it more efficient and more effective. He remarked that improving student achievement is his overall goal.

President Ruggiero stated he has presided over the Board meetings during the past year and his actions speak louder than his words. He said he has accepted and presented the Board's position and worked to cultivate the experiences of each board member. He further stated he has reached out to members who wanted to be on particular boards and commissions while encouraging them to attend retreats and further their education on issues. President Ruggiero said under his tenure, the Board has become viable and gained respect from Legislators. He added he has more experience testifying at the Legislature and with many important meetings coming up the Board needs a representative that can convey the Boards thoughts and wishes. President Ruggiero said he would not deviate from the Board's position and they need one voice, one body.

**There being no further nominations, Dr. Rheault closed the nominations for President and called for a vote. Seven members voted in support Member Wallace for President. Two members voted in support of President Ruggiero for President. The motion carried for Member Wallace as Board President.**

- **Vice President - Member Biggerstaff nominated Member Ferry as the 2010 Nevada State Board of Education, Vice President. Hearing no further nominations, Dr. Rheault closed the nominations for Vice President and called for a vote. The motion carried.**
- **Clerk - Member Wilkinson nominated Member Cook as the 2010 Nevada State Board of Education, Clerk. Hearing no further nominations, Dr. Rheault closed the nominations for Clerk and called for a vote. The motion carried.**

### **Discussion of the 2010 Subcommittee on Task Force Assignments, Advisory Council Appointments and Appointments to Organizations**

President Wallace asked the members to email which task force or committee they are interested in being on to the Board Secretary.

### **Board Member/Public Comments**

Member Chaney stated her vote for Board President was a difficult decision. She said that she thought it was crucial to have a President whose goal was to improve student achievement.

Member Biggerstaff congratulated the new officers and thanked Member Ruggiero for his year of work and leadership.

Member Ruggiero thanked Member Cook for his nomination.

Member Hill thanked Member Ruggiero for his dedication and service to the State Board and said she appreciated his conscientious contributions.

Member Wilkinson thanked Member Ruggiero for his commitment over the past and congratulated Chris Wallace as the new Board President.

Member Cook congratulated President Wallace. He thanked Member Ruggiero for his leadership and dedication during a difficult year and he thanked the Board for his election as Clerk.

Member Ferry agreed important steps were made in the past year and Member Ruggiero deserves appreciation for his work as the Board President.

Student Representative Zhan Okuda-Lim thanked Member Ruggiero for his service and support as Board President and congratulated the new officers of the Board. He said he looks forward to playing a productive role as a student representing students across the state. He stated he drafted and sent a copy of an Education First update to Nevada student councils as well as the Board members and said he would appreciate it if they took a moment to read it.

Member Cook said he received the copy from Zhan, and has passed it on to other elected officials. He complimented Student Representative Okuda-Lim and said it was a fine document.

Dr. Rheault announced that Student Representative Okuda-Lim was selected as one of two Nevada representatives under the Senate Youth Scholarship program sponsored by the Hearst Foundation. Students must have a 4.0 average and only top students are nominated. Both representatives go to Washington D.C. to meet State Senators and it is a prestigious national scholarship award.

President Wallace thanked the Board for electing him as President. He thanked Member Ruggiero for all his work and service and stated he has big shoes to fill.

There were no public comments.

### **Future Agenda Items**

Member Biggerstaff asked for an overview of the empowerment schools at the next Board meeting. She also asked for an overview on the audit report for Educational Excellence.

Dr. Rheault said he would give a presentation on Race to the Top.

### **Adjournment**

President Wallace adjourned the meeting at 12:06 p.m.