

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**Seventy-Third Session
February 9, 2005**

The Committee on Education was called to order at 3:48 p.m., on Wednesday, February 9, 2005. Chairwoman Bonnie Parnell presided in Room 3142 of the Legislative Building, Carson City, Nevada. [Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda. All exhibits are available and on file at the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Ms. Bonnie Parnell, Chairwoman
Mrs. Debbie Smith, Vice Chairwoman
Mrs. Sharron Angle
Mr. Kelvin Atkinson
Mr. Joe Hardy
Mr. Brooks Holcomb
Mr. William Horne
Mr. Garn Mabey
Mr. Mark Manendo
Mr. Bob McCleary
Mr. Harvey J. Munford

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Assemblyman Richard Perkins, Assembly District No. 23, Clark County

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Carol Stonefield, Committee Policy Analyst
Rachel Pilliod, Committee Manager

OTHERS PRESENT:

Gloria Dopf, Deputy Superintendent, Department of Education, State of Nevada

Chairwoman Parnell:

[Meeting called to order and roll called. Chairwoman Parnell introduced herself, members of the Committee, and Committee staff members.] As our first order of business, we'll have the adoption of the Standing Committee Rules ([Exhibit B](#)). There are a couple of things in the rules that I would like to point out before we take a motion. If you see number 4 in the Standing Rules, I'd like to warn those of the Committee and those testifying that the minutes are being done verbatim. That hasn't been done the last few sessions. Those of you testifying and those on the Committee might want to keep that in mind. I didn't highlight number 5, because I plan on having field trips on this Committee, and that would apply to rule number 5. Number 6, six members of this Committee do constitute a quorum. And, probably most important, if you go to the very last page, number 17—under treatment of witnesses—I would expect that this Committee deal respectfully, courteously, and professionally at all times to anyone coming to the table to testify. I would also ask in return that anyone coming to the table please extend that same courtesy.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN SMITH MOVED TO APPROVE THE STANDING RULES FOR THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION.

ASSEMBLYMAN McCLEARY SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Chairwoman Parnell:

At this time, it is with great pleasure that I introduce the Speaker of the Assembly, Mr. Richard Perkins. As many of you in the audience know, Speaker Perkins decided during the interim to chair the Education Committee. He took a good look at what the Education Committee needed, added a different perspective to it. He made some decisions that I thought were wonderful. I am anxious to see what he found enlightening during that period.

Assemblyman Richard Perkins, Assembly District No. 23, Clark County:

[Read from prepared testimony, [Exhibit C](#).]

I am here today to talk to you about the work of the Legislative Committee on Education during the 2003-2004 Interim. Education is about the future. It always has been; it always will be. The

framers of Nevada's Constitution knew that. They cared enough about education to make sure that the people of this state, through their Legislature, provided for a system of public schools and that those schools are supported and maintained.

[Assemblyman Perkins, continued.] We honor and value local control of our schools. The parents, teachers, administrators, and board members are the ones who know the children, know the community, know the resources, and the right way to achieve their goals and ours. Madam Chair, Nevada is a big state. It is a diverse state. One size does not fit all. But too often from the halls of Carson City and from Washington, policymakers try to make the schools, the districts, and the children fit into a single mold.

In my opinion, there is no more important interim committee than the Legislative Committee on Education. It is one of the Legislature's statutory committees. It was created in 1997 to monitor reforms and hold public education accountable for improvements.

In 2003, when I assumed the chairmanship of the committee, I decided it was time to change the focus. I thought we could do that by reaching out into the communities and seeing first hand how the changes we have mandated in the past are taking shape and what we need to do to help the schools meet those challenges.

If we are going to improve public education in Nevada, we have to think of it as a partnership. It was my belief, Madam Chair, that we could do a better job of that by having meetings in communities around the state, rather than in the legislative buildings here in Carson City and in Las Vegas.

We took the Committee on the road to six different schools in six months, including high schools in Reno and Henderson, the Southern Nevada Vocational Technical Center in Las Vegas, an elementary school in Elko, the High-Technical Center in Pahrump, and the continuing education building at the University of Nevada at Reno.

At most of these sites we heard from a panel of parents, teachers, business people, students, and administrators. We had a free and

fair exchange of ideas about what is working in Nevada schools and what needs to be improved.

[Assemblyman Perkins, continued.] I can assure you that these Nevadans did not hold back. They told us things that they thought we needed to hear. To their credit, they told us about the good things as well as the bad. Nevada is one of the most urban states in the country, because its population is concentrated in two places, Reno and Las Vegas. All of the members of the committee were from one or the other of those two cities.

By going to Elko and Pahrump, the committee had a better understanding of distances between communities. That, in turn, helped us to realize challenges facing most of the rest of Nevada. For example, how do we meet the federal requirement of school choice when the nearest school is 60 miles away? How do we recruit highly qualified teachers to staff isolated schools? How do we mentor a new teacher when she might be the entire English department? These kinds of questions took on new meaning for us.

At the Southern Nevada Vocational Technical Center (SNVTC), the committee heard from kids who said that, if it were not for the dedicated teachers there, they would be dropouts. They talked about reading programs that got them on grade level and the difficulties of coming from homes where English is not the spoken language. Instead, the Vocational Technical Center will help them get good paying jobs in culinary arts, information technology, or graphic arts; all rapidly growing fields in Southern Nevada's booming economy. Some will go on to college, all because teachers care.

But we also heard from teachers who said that the mandates of recent years have them so disheartened that they will take early retirement. We heard from bright students, even one young man who came to the meeting in a jacket and tie, who expressed concern that their high school years will be consumed with testing at the expense of learning. We heard from administrators who talked about the changing role of school leadership and the pressures to produce high test scores against some of the overwhelming socioeconomic and demographic realities that their students bring to school.

[Assemblyman Perkins, continued.] My goal in taking the committee on the road was to reach out to the less populated areas of the state and to give an opportunity to citizens who do not have the time to travel to Carson City to testify before a committee, chiefly because they are earning a living and raising a family. It is important to try and get the perspective of those who have to live with the impact of the laws we pass. This new perspective gives us a chance to be creative in how we approach this legislative session and the recommendations we make.

In conclusion, Madam Chair, let me just say that I went on the road with the expectation that we would give others access to the legislative process. I came away with a healthy regard for our public schools. I hope that the rest of the committee did as well. Mr. McCleary and Mr. Horne served with me on the Committee. There are things the schools could do better, just as there are things that we, the Legislature, could do better, but we should not be at cross purposes. We have to work together to close the achievement gap and to raise test scores for all students. We broke new ground by getting the hearings on the Internet. We learned some things. We met some concerned and dedicated people. I enjoyed myself. I would do it again.

I was well heartened by your suggestion that this Committee may end up taking some trips and finding out what is going on in the many communities that Nevada has. Before I stop there with my prepared remarks, let me just suggest to you that our educational system in Nevada takes a beating from us all. We all criticize it. We all want to do better, but, on the whole, we have an extraordinary system. We all have challenges and we need to do better. We need to do better for our teachers, our kids, and everybody else. But there are some very bright young people in this state that do a great deal with a little, and my hat is certainly off to them for their accomplishments.

Chairwoman Parnell:

After going to all of the schools and listening to everyone, what would you say you were most surprised by or most pleased to see that you weren't aware of? It's a completely different thing going into the schools and listening to the teachers and the students.

Assemblyman Perkins:

Each meeting at each school had its own pleasant surprise. There are a number of things that stuck out, and to see the energy in the faculty and to see the energy in the students that came before the Committee was most heartening.

[Assemblyman Perkins, continued.] One of the meetings was at Foothill High School in my district in Henderson. To have students show up very well dressed and very eager to be involved in the decision making for their own education, to be very eager to tell us as a Committee what we were doing wrong and what they would benefit from in their own schooling, was extraordinary for us to hear.

On the disheartening side, I think I had a fairly firm understanding of what the challenges were in our urban districts. We all hear about that fairly regularly, and the two largest newspapers in the state cover that fairly regularly. But to go to Elko and have the superintendent come forward and tell us about a school that isn't making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and is deemed in need of improvement, all those kids are offered school choice, but the nearest school is 60 miles away. That's not a choice. To really have a firm understanding that the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), for example, in my opinion, has some noble goals and some very strong values that are attached to it, but it was a cookiecutter approach from Washington that is being applied throughout this country, and we're not a country of one type of culture or one type of people.

As well, I was very heartened by a personal visit that I took to C.P. Squires Elementary School in Las Vegas. Carol Lark was the principal at the time; she has since been promoted to an assistant superintendent. That is a school that I believe was above 80 percent in a free and reduced lunch program and other socioeconomic factors that generally don't bode well for a school. She took some of the money that we had in a pilot program for discipline that was instituted in 1999. It was Speaker Dini's bill that year. She took a school where they had a number of disciplinary problems to the point where, after three years of instituting this program, the school had virtually none. All of those students did very, very well. Walking around and seeing how they were performing was an inspiration.

We found a number of other challenges that we, as a legislature, have not performed as we should. If we were to apply the No Child Left Behind standards to this Legislature and measure whether we are making Adequate Yearly Progress, I trust that we would find that we are not. We would very quickly be deemed in need of improvement. If we take it truly as a partnership between this Legislature and our 17 school districts, then we need to take that into account as well.

There is no single more important issue in our state than education, and it's my honor to be here to present to your Committee. Each Interim Committee hearing had a different theme and we tried to structure it that way, but I'm sure that Carol Stonefield can run through that for your Committee's benefit. If you have

any questions after that I'm happy to return if you need me to and offer you my insight, but you have on your Committee Mr. McCleary and Mr. Horne. They were both on the Interim Committee and were very attentive and added a great deal to our deliberations. They can clear up anything much better than I can.

Chairwoman Parnell:

Before I turn it over to Ms. Stonefield, I would like to reference what the Speaker was talking about. That was Assembly Bill 521 of the 70th Legislative Session. A pilot program was established at C.P. Squires for disciplinary issues. It was very, very successful. That program has not continued. It is part of the iNVEST program, and that will be presented to you on Monday. There is also going to be a bill draft from Committee referencing Assembly Bill 521 of the 70th Legislative Session. Keep that in mind, because it was successful and it is coming back.

Carol Stonefield, Committee Policy Analyst, Legislative Counsel Bureau:

I was the Policy Analyst for the Interim Legislative Committee on Education, and I'm here at the request of the chairman, Speaker Perkins, and the Chair of this Committee to give you a summary of the activities of the Interim Committee.

Most of you will recall that the two big issues that came out of the 2003 Session, the 19th Special Session, and the 20th Special Session were funding and compliance with the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). When we started meeting, the Legislative Committee on Education received a briefing on the current status of accountability among the 17 school districts, especially as they worked to comply with NCLB. Briefly, one of the goals of NCLB is to achieve 100 percent proficiency in reading and math by the 2013-14 school year. Nevada's plan is contained in the document from the Department of Education called "All Children Can Succeed." It is on the Department of Education website, for those of you that are interested.

AYP is a term I am sure you've heard a lot before and you'll hear again; it means Adequate Yearly Progress. NCLB requires that every state make some kind of incremental progress until it reaches 100 percent proficiency based upon those tests in the 2013-14 school year. In 2004-05, the AYP is calculated on third grade Criterion Reference Tests (CRTs) in math and reading, grade 4 writing, grade 5 CRTs, grade 8 CRTs and writing, and grade 10 high school proficiency exams. Next year we will have all CRTs in grades 3 through 8, writing in grades 4 and 8, and high school proficiency in grade 10.

We also have, for our own use, Norm-Referenced Tests (NRTs) in grades 4, 7, and 10. Those will continue. They were mandated by NERA [Nevada Education Reform Act of 1997], but they are not part of the AYP calculations anymore.

Based on the 2003-04 of 567 schools, this year we have 12 exemplary, 70 high achieving, 264 adequate, 99 that failed to make AYP their first time—so they are on the watch list—and 122 schools are considered to be in need of improvement.

[Carol Stonefield, continued.] As you all recall, NCLB also requires that all data must be disaggregated into socioeconomic status, limited English proficient, students with a disability, and the major racial and ethnic groups. To make AYP in an elementary or middle school in Nevada in this current year and for the next couple of years, roughly 40 to 45 percent of the children must achieve proficiency. Then, as we incrementally increase from 2007-09, it's about 50 percent to 55 percent in English, language arts, and math. Starting in the 2009-10 school year, increases become kind of steep until we actually achieve 100 percent proficiency. In high school, English and language arts are already at 78 percent, and math proficiency is at 52 percent.

NCLB also has a lot of consequences that were also incorporated into Senate Bill 1 of the 19th Special Session, which is our compliance legislation. The first year that a school is deemed in need of improvement, the consequences include school choice, and every year after that, additional sanctions are applied, including supplemental services in year 2. The non-Title I schools do not have to meet these same requirements. In year 3, we have to have corrective action; in year 4, a plan for reconstruction; and in year 5, the possibility of alternate governance. Corrective actions include replacing staff, establishing a new curriculum, or extending the school day or the school year. Based upon the information that we received in the first couple of meetings, the Committee came to understand that its role was probably that of focusing on meeting the needs of NCLB and closing the achievement gap through various strategies.

In your packet you have an abstract from the bulletin from the Committee Report ([Exhibit D](#)). The BDRs that came from the committee that relate to NCLB specifically would be some changes to reporting dates, testing, and accountability, academic standards. These are contained in BDR 482 and BDR 484. Some of the recommendations that came from the committee include:

- A task force to analyze the high school proficiency exam
- Study guides that are individualized to students based upon their high school proficiency exam scores, if they didn't pass it the first time
- A study of distance education funding so that more distance education opportunities might be made available, especially in the rural districts
- Grants to continue educational technology funding

- Continuing funding the remediation programs and the supplemental services
- Moving the writing exam that is now in fourth grade to fifth grade, because the fourth graders seem to be hit pretty hard with a lot of standardized tests
- Various changes to the operations of AYP

[Carol Stonefield, continued.] Getting on to the various strategies of closing the achievement gap, the committee focused on parental involvement, principally in Reno at Damonte Ranch High School, but parent involvement came out in a lot of the panel discussions with parents and students and business people whenever we had one of those at these remote sites. Assembly Bill 201 of the 71st Legislative Session required the State Board of Education to develop a parent involvement policy. It also required the board of trustees of each local school district to adopt one. According to the Department of Education, each district has complied with that policy to varying extents. Everyone has adopted one, but only a couple of them have actually developed a strategic or action plan that they have posted on their websites or made available to the public.

The committee decided that parent involvement was one of the keys to closing the achievement gap and increasing student achievement. Concepts that were mentioned at Damonte Ranch High School include requiring the state and all districts to develop a strategic plan for implementation of parent involvement, encouraging all districts to have personnel who are specifically responsible for this area, and including parental involvement in the kinds of programs offered by the Regional Professional Development Program (RPDP). The committee received a presentation at Damonte Ranch High School by the Washoe County School District's Parent Involvement Initiative Strategic Plan, and Assemblywoman Smith was one of the presenters on that. The committee eventually adopted recommendations to the Superintendent of Public Instruction to:

- Convene a statewide advisory council on parent involvement
- Require the State Board of Education's plan and the school district plans for improvement to include strategies that promote effective parent involvement
- To allow the RPDPs to provide training to teachers and administrators on communicating with parents
- Continue the appropriation for the parent information brochures

Those of you who have children have probably seen them. This was a contract, an RFP [request for proposal], that went to The Grow Network. The appropriation would also include an RFP for this time, should the Legislature appropriate that money. These are contained in BDR 475.

[Carol Stonefield, continued.] The committee also looked at school leadership, focusing on that at its meeting in Pahrump. They received testimony on the value of board training. While board training is available in the urban districts, the rural districts have often lacked the resources to provide on-site training or to pay board members for travel to conferences where they might receive board training. We also heard testimony that No Child Left Behind has placed increased demands on building leaders. We heard about professional development for school leaders, and we also heard that there is a shift in emphasis to proficiency and productivity that has actually decreased local decision making and has increased top-down directedness. We also heard a few housekeeping issues. For example, members of boards of trustees testified that they often lack information on federal laws and regulations, and we also heard that the charter schools are not receiving information.

The recommendations from the committee regarding school leadership are contained in BDR 476. This includes an annual information manual from the Nevada Department of Education (NDOE). Currently, NDOE is required to send some kind of information item—a newsletter or memo—from the Superintendent of Public Instruction to the local boards following each legislative session, summarizing the activities of the Legislature. This would become an annual manual, and it would include updates on federal regulations, case law, or anything else that the Department thinks that the board would benefit from. There is also a professional development conference for board members. Currently, the Department sponsors what they call the Mega Conference. The Committee simply asked the Superintendent of Public Instruction to include a track for board members.

Assemblyman Perkins:

I'd like to share two additional things that I also took away from this Interim Committee, and I appreciate your indulgence. My personal belief is that the single biggest impact in terms of a change in program in our K-12 system would be full-day kindergarten. Empirical data exists to support that, and I am sure that this Committee will go through that. Secondly, the other thing that struck me as we work through the No Child Left Behind mandates and our own Nevada Education Reform Act mandates: we are very much trying to catch those kids who are falling through the cracks, and that is very, very important.

As we do that, though, and as the NCLB mandates are being implemented, I think there is a shortage of funding that has come from the federal government to accomplish those mandates. As well, there is a shortage of funding at the district level for the mandates for this Legislature. But as we do that, we've required our districts to re-task their resources. To help those kids make AYP, they are oftentimes taking money away from the gifted and talented kids. We

need to make sure that we are taking care of all kids. It is important that we do catch those kids as they fall through the cracks and raise them up, but we also need to create opportunities for the best and brightest in our state so they can continue to work diligently. Educational opportunity should be equal for all, and unfortunately, in this era of cookie-cutter approaches, it's not always that way.

Chairwoman Parnell:

I think we all agree that we often start to focus on one part of the population and really forget to stand back and take a good look at the fact that all students need as much assistance and as much help as we can give them.

Assemblyman Perkins:

We can't force any child to learn, but every child should have an opportunity to do their best. I think we can ask that of this Legislature.

Carol Stonefield:

Another area that we focused on when we were at Damonte Ranch High School was school personnel. That is the mandate from No Child Left Behind that all teachers will be "highly qualified" by the end of the 2005-06 school year. We had testimony from Craig Gerald, who is with the Education Trust, and his position that all the research the Education Trust had conducted led them to conclude that probably the single biggest factor in student achievement is to receive instruction from a highly effective teacher. In Nevada, we also learned that 70 percent of the teaching force comes from another state. Because we are growing so rapidly, we recruit from different places. So recruitment and retention are significant factors in developing a highly effective or highly qualified teaching force.

In 2003, legislators were informed that shortages of teachers exist in certain subjects, such as mathematics, science, special education, and English as a Second Language (ESL). Also, there is a shortage in school psychologists. The topics for presentation on this subject included effective performance-based evaluation for improvement. We had a staff person from the Education Commission of the States who had done some research in this area, and she presented some information to the committee. We heard from the Washoe County School District Teacher Performance Evaluation System, which provides an overview of teaching performance in 4 domains of teaching, which are closely aligned to their teaching standards. We heard a presentation on the review of Nevada's status in achieving "highly qualified" teachers for the whole work force, which, for those of you who may need to have a little refresher to recall what "highly qualified" is, the requirements of NCLB are that each teacher has a bachelor's degree; full certification—that is, that there are no provisions on the certificates—and that they would be able to demonstrate competence in

the elementary grades, with a test at the middle school or high school level, with a test or major in the subject that they are going to teach.

[Carol Stonefield, continued.] Another challenge for Nevada was to establish the middle school license. We have allowed teachers in some of our schools to teach seventh or eighth grade in a grade one through eight school with an elementary school license. In other areas, because we had junior high or middle school, a teacher with a secondary license would teach those same grades. We've had to develop a middle school license.

Another area where Nevada has had some challenge is that we have allowed teachers to teach with their minors. Of course, No Child Left Behind requires a major in the field—but there is a period of time when teachers can take some courses and upgrade—or the High Objective of Uniform State Standard of Evaluation (HOUSSE) rules, where they can somehow demonstrate that they are proficient in that subject area that they are teaching. We heard about the alternative teaching certification program that Clark County School District (CCSD) operates.

We heard about the RPDPs on professional development. We heard from a couple of teachers who are National Board certified and the difference that they think that has made in their teaching performance. We talked about the placement of highly effective teachers in hard-to-staff schools. The recommendations that came out of the Legislative Committee on Education regarding all of these issues related to school personnel are in BDR 477, BDR 478, and BDR 479. These include a lot of programs that are currently in existence, such as the continuation of the \$2,000 signing bonus, the continuation of the one-fifth retirement credit for hard-to-staff positions—such as math, science, special education, and ESL—or in hard-to-staff schools and schools in need of improvement.

The committee recommended extending the one-fifth retirement credit to deans, counselors, principals, nurses, and librarians at hard-to-staff schools. They also recommended providing a choice between the one-fifth retirement credit or a cash stipend or some combination. There has also been some discussion, although it didn't come from the committee recommendation, about providing funds for graduate school.

The committee also is recommending stipends in isolated schools, so that people who are teaching or who are employed in those schools would receive an extra salary boost. The bill draft is to be written to include a hard-to-staff school anywhere in the state—not limited to certain school districts—and then the district would be required to justify its application for a particular school,

that it is hard to staff. This would enable Washoe and Clark Counties to also apply for hard-to-staff schools in the rural areas of those counties. The committee is going to recommend purchasing teacher education slots through WICHE [Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education]; I think it was 20 per year, and there would be the loan forgiveness provisions at one-third per year. This would enable the colleges of education to recruit people to go into teaching math or teaching in science, one of the other hard-to-staff fields. Then there would also be continued appropriations for National Board Certification reimbursement for costs associated with obtaining ESL [English as a second language] endorsement, and also the funding for the RPDs, which runs \$8.5 million each year.

[Carol Stonefield, continued.] The Chairman, Assemblyman Perkins, has talked to you already about full-day kindergarten. The Committee heard from a kindergarten teacher in Elko about the difficulties that she faces. High-stakes testing has created some serious problems for young children, and she talked about those who are coming to kindergarten who aren't even at the starting line yet. She told us about children that she deals with who don't even have literacy awareness. By that she means they don't even comprehend that these little squiggles on paper are letters that represent sounds. Some of them don't know how to hold a book, let alone read it. And yet, they are starting kindergarten at the same time as children who already know how to read.

That led to the discussion when we were at the Southern Nevada Vocational Tech Center. We had a kindergarten expert who came in and talked about kindergarten as an opportunity and if we don't take advantage of it, it's an opportunity gap. She had statistics on language development by family income, and she also advised the committee that kindergarten curriculum is far more important than people tend to give it credit for, because it can be used as a vehicle for closing the achievement gap.

The whole issue of full day kindergarten resulted in two BDRs. BDR 480 would phase in full-day kindergarten over a period of time. The committee recommended funding a fixed appropriation, and the estimate that we considered at the time was around \$9.5 million per year. That would fund about 16 percent of the schools. The assumption would be that in the next biennium, those schools would be funded, and there would be an increase so that eventually, over a period of years, all schools would be able to provide full-day kindergarten in all of their elementary schools. BDR 481 relates to curriculum for full-day kindergarten.

The last area that the Committee really focused on was the transition from high school to college. There has been a lot of concern expressed about Millennium

Scholarships. The increasing number of students who come directly from high school, enter college, and require remedial courses was addressed. The Committee heard about the Rural Academic Persistence Program at UNR [University of Nevada, Reno] and they were quite impressed with it. It was a program to mentor kids from the rural districts and enable them to make the transition to a large public state university.

[Carol Stonefield, continued.] The recommendations relating to the transition from high school to college are included in BDR 482. This particular provision is a directive from the committee to itself in the future to study the transition from high school to college in the next interim. They would be considering such things as the alignment of the high school graduation requirements to the high school proficiency exam and the alignment of the high school curriculum to college readiness. Nevada has one of the lowest college-going rates of students directly from high school to college. It is improving, but it is much lower than a number of other states. That would be another one of the issues that the Legislative Committee on Education would consider if this passes. This is its directive to itself.

That, Madam Chair, is a summary of the activities. The bulletin is number 05-15 ([Exhibit E](#)). It is available now, in addition to the abstract that you have before you, and it summarizes all of the major presentations and the recommendations from the Committee.

Assemblyman Manendo:

I did have a question on number 29 on the proposals. My question had to do with the educational technology, to set priorities for the granting of the General Funds to districts to acquire or maintain technology system and services. Which school districts do we know need to acquire the technology? Do we have some districts or specific schools that don't have the technology? I am fearful, thinking ahead of the game, if there are schools that have technology and need upgrades, and you have schools that don't have any technology because we haven't been there yet. I am just wondering what are priorities are.

Carol Stonefield:

For the last several biennia, the State has provided aid to these schools for educational technology in the form of a one-time appropriation. It's \$9.95 million for a biennium. Portions of it are dedicated to various other things, and then there is a portion that is distributed on the basis of grants. This recommendation requires the Commission on Educational Technology to set priorities for the distribution of that portion. The Commission on Educational Technology studied this whole issue last fall and came up with their recommendations. I believe that it has been included in The Executive Budget

now as a continuing appropriation rather than just one time. This, of course, was written prior to that, so it may be that this BDR won't address exactly this situation, given that the educational technology is in the budget. The need for educational technology in the schools far exceeds this amount of appropriation. The first year—I believe it was, perhaps, 1997 or 1999—the State provided about \$30 million, and the schools purchased a lot of equipment, both hardware and software. Much of that is getting older, but some of those computers are still being used in the schools. There is quite a need for educational technology. Also, one of the other recommendations is that the Commission on Educational Technology work with the Commission on Professional Standards to develop some kind of continuing education to require teachers to develop a means of integrating technology into their instruction, so that the use of it becomes more integrated into their delivery.

Assemblyman Manendo:

Maybe we could have somebody from the Commission on Educational Technology come before this Committee to talk to us a little about which schools are in desperate need to acquire the technology. Are they really that far behind? I know there are some schools in my district that are way behind, compared to some schools that I visited that are state of the art. I think we have some discrepancies there, and we need to address that.

Assemblywoman Parnell:

Thank you. I will make note of that, and we will have a report on that issue.

Assemblyman Munford:

My question is about NCLB's requirements for teaching certain classes and that you had to have a major in a particular subject to teach. What if a teacher has had a long-standing tenure, has been teaching a long time and doesn't have a major, but he does have a minor. Is he still eligible to continue teaching in that particular class without having the major? With NCLB, would the school be rated lower in some areas?

Carol Stonefield:

NCLB has a requirement that every state develop what are known as the HOSSE rules. Every state develops requirements or rules that would address the transition for experienced teachers. I would have to beg off on exactly what those requirements are—I don't have them in front of me—but teachers who have been teaching in a field can demonstrate their proficiency in that subject area by taking a test. That is one way to do it. There are other ways; those include continuing education units or going back and picking up whatever college courses that they might want to do. Some of these programs are being

offered through the RPDPs. I can follow up on that and get you a copy of the HOUSSE rules, if that would be useful.

Gloria Dopf, Deputy Superintendent, Department of Education, State of Nevada:

My oversight responsibility is instruction, evaluation, and research, so I have had the pleasure, at times, and the pain, at times, of trying to help put together the package of NCLB within state law. With the issue of "highly qualified," the State Board of Education adopted the HOUSSE rules, as Ms. Stonefield had mentioned, and she did a very good job of identifying what those referenced. When NCLB was passed, it allowed us to achieve the 100 percent for "highly qualified" in the content area by the 2005-06 school year. At that time, we had approximately three years in order to accomplish that. The HOUSSE standards allowed for teachers who were not new to the profession, who had been working, but who were not "highly qualified" under the rigorous definition that was referenced here, to utilize the three years that they were working until the end of the 2005-06 school year as experience.

The first thing that the HOUSSE standards set up was a qualification where if a teacher was teaching in the content area for at least three years, that would be one part of accomplishing HOUSSE. That was merged with a content requirement. Those teachers who were not new to the field, who would be working three years in the content area, could accomplish the content competency by having 150 hours, which equated to ten credits in the content area or in the teaching area by the end of the 2005-2006 school year. If they accomplished that, that would be accomplishing "highly qualified," which is different than a license or a major in that content area. That was one of the components of HOUSSE that considered the existing teachers and their experience.

We also had issues of multiple subjects. In the HOUSSE standards, you could teach multiple subjects over a three-year period and be considered highly qualified as well. There is some additional guidance relative to some of those factors—basically, three years of teaching in the content area, plus 150 hours of coursework—that can be provided not only through universities, but, as Ms. Stonefield indicated, through district coursework such as RPDP or Department of Education training programs. We are allowed to have a different latitude of ways to accomplish the credit hours.

Assemblyman Munford:

Basically, a minor doesn't carry any weight at all, then? If someone graduates from college and they receive their degree with a major and minor, a minor doesn't matter until they have taken extra classes and done the required hours?

Gloria Dopf:

The minor would allow them to demonstrate the core content in those 150 hours, but they would also have to be teaching the three years as well. If you came out with a minor and were a new teacher, you would not be considered highly qualified. However, teachers that had a minor and were working in the content area for the three years would probably be able to demonstrate the 150 credits of that concentrated content credit. From that perspective, the minor could help.

Chairwoman Parnell:

I am sure we will continue to go back to this. We should have a couple of the BDRs from the Interim Committee on Education coming out. We already have one out. Within the next couple of weeks we'll have more. One thing I hope to do this time is try to cluster similar ideas together. We might have a parent involvement week so all related legislation would be heard together. That way, the Committee members could look at the issues and the choices out there to make a well-informed decision when we make decisions. I think it would also help those coming in from out of town. If there is just an issue that you have in particular, like higher education, then we'd have a week where you could come up. That is the goal. A lot of it will depend on how timely the bills fit my design. That might not be the case, but I'd like to see that, because I think it would really help all of us.

In the 2003 Session, the Nevada State School Boards Association and Superintendents Association did a presentation before Senate Finance on their iNVEST program. It did not get out of Senate Finance. Therefore, no one on the Assembly side got to see that presentation. I felt that it was extremely important. It gives us all a long-term goal. It would allow all of us to think about which parts of iNVEST are the most important. We will be having a presentation on Monday, February 14, 2005 from the superintendents and the School Boards Association on that very important piece of legislation. We will not be acting on it. It is a presentation and a report to the Committee only.

Carol Stonefield:

You also have received the Committee Brief ([Exhibit D](#)). It summarizes for you the jurisdiction of the Committee, which is all of the chapters in Title 34 except Chapter 387, which relates to school finance. Those bills typically go to the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means. There is also a summary of education issues from the 2003 Session, the reports that may be of interest to you, potential education issues for 2005, and also contact information for some of the key education folks in the state. I would like to go to pages 6 through 9. These pages highlight the reports in a table format. For example, on page 6, the bottom line reads, "The State Board's Plan to Improve Student Achievement."

That report was produced and received in the Legislature on December 1, 2004, I think.

[Carol Stonefield, continued.] On page 7, you might be interested in the State Board of Education's Class Size Reduction Report; the State Board of Education's National Assessment of Educational Progress Reports; Council to Establish Academic Standards produces the results of the Criterion Reference Test; and the Nevada Department of Education's Test Security and Test Irregularities.

On page 8, the Superintendent of Public Instruction is required to compile an analyzed district review of the mathematics curriculum alignment with the high school proficiency exam. This second section that starts on page 7 and goes on to page 8 are special reports that were mandated by the 2003 Session for the 2005 Legislature. The Legislative Auditor conducted performance audits of Clark County School District (CCSD) and Washoe County School District (WCSD). Any school districts implementing alternative class-size reduction programs were required to report those. Also, Clark County and Washoe County were directed to study alternative pupil-to-teacher ratios.

On page 9, the Board of Regents has a statutory report to update the Legislature on its comprehensive planning activities. Under Special Reports from Higher Education, Assembly Bill 203 of the 72nd Session is the Committee to Evaluate Higher Education programs as the result of a lengthy interim study. That is out in bulletin form.

There were several other committees that looked into education issues, and they are in this section on pages 9 through 11. For example, the Legislative Committee on Persons with Disabilities has recommended a bill draft to create a cross-agency independent advisory board to oversee the transition of public school students with disabilities to either the workplace or higher education. The Legislative Committee on Health Care and its subcommittee to study medical and societal costs of obesity have recommendations to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, requesting him to survey the public schools regarding the presence of vending machines. There are a number of other committees that have looked into education issues besides the Legislative Committee on Education. The issues for the 2005 Session will probably center on compliance with No Child Left Behind.

One of the potential federal issues, which we probably won't have to deal with this session, is President Bush's recommendation that NCLB be extended into the high school years, including an exit exam. We may have to react to that at some point. The Higher Education Act reauthorization will also probably not

occur during this session, but it's out there. The last couple of pages include contact lists and websites that might be of interest or useful to you at some point when you are doing research on issues.

Chairwoman Parnell:

Is there any additional business to come before this Committee? Seeing or hearing none, the meeting stands adjourned [at 5:00 p.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Paul Partida
Transcribing Attaché

APPROVED BY:

Assemblywoman Bonnie Parnell, Chairwoman

DATE: _____

EXHIBITS

Committee Name: Education

Date: February 9, 2005 **Time of Meeting:** 3:48 pm

Bill #	Exhibit ID	Witness/Agency	Dept.	Description
	A	*****		Agenda
	B	Chairwoman Parnell		Committee standing rules
	C	Assemblyman Perkins		Prepared testimony
	D	Carol Stonefield/LCB		Committee brief
	E	Carol Stonefield/LCB		Bulletin No. 05-15