

MINUTES  
OF THE JOINT MEETING  
OF THE  
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
AND THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Seventy-Sixth Session  
April 20, 2011

The Joint Assembly Committee on Ways and Means and the Senate Committee on Finance was called to order by Chairwoman Debbie Smith at 7:44 a.m. on Wednesday, April 20, 2011, in Room 4100 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. Copies of the minutes, including the Agenda ([Exhibit A](#)), the Attendance Roster ([Exhibit B](#)), and other substantive exhibits, are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau and on the Nevada Legislature's website at [www.leg.state.nv.us/76th2011/committees/](http://www.leg.state.nv.us/76th2011/committees/). In addition, copies of the audio record may be purchased through the Legislative Counsel Bureau's Publications Office (email: [publications@lcb.state.nv.us](mailto:publications@lcb.state.nv.us); telephone: 775-684-6835).

**ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Assemblywoman Debbie Smith, Chairwoman  
Assemblyman Marcus Conklin, Vice Chair  
Assemblyman Paul Aizley  
Assemblyman Kelvin Atkinson  
Assemblyman David P. Bobzien  
Assemblywoman Maggie Carlton  
Assemblyman Pete Goicoechea  
Assemblyman Tom Grady  
Assemblyman John Hambrick  
Assemblyman Crescent Hardy  
Assemblyman Pat Hickey  
Assemblyman Joseph M. Hogan  
Assemblyman Randy Kirner  
Assemblywoman April Mastroluca  
Assemblyman John Ocegüera

**SENATE COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Senator Steven A. Horsford, Chair  
Senator Sheila Leslie, Vice Chair  
Senator Barbara K. Cegavske  
Senator Moises (Mo) Denis  
Senator Ben Kieckhefer  
Senator David R. Parks  
Senator Dean A. Rhoads

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Rick Combs, Assembly Fiscal Analyst  
Mark Krmpotic, Senate Fiscal Analyst  
Mike Chapman, Principal Deputy Fiscal Analyst  
Rex Goodman, Principal Deputy Fiscal Analyst  
Carol Thomsen, Committee Secretary  
Cynthia Wyett, Committee Assistant

Chairwoman Smith announced that the Committee would hear a presentation from Data Quality Campaign about the use of data to improve student achievement. Chairwoman Smith welcomed Ms. Guidera and asked her to commence her presentation. Chairwoman Smith pointed out that the importance of data to gauge student achievement in Nevada had been the topic of many legislative discussions.

Aimee Guidera, Executive Director, Data Quality Campaign, explained that Data Quality Campaign was a national collaborative effort to work with state policymakers and help them understand the demand for, and the use of, quality longitudinal data to improve student achievement. Ms. Guidera said she would review material from a PowerPoint presentation entitled, "Data Quality Campaign, Using Data to Improve Student Achievement," [Exhibit C](#). Ms. Guidera also presented [Exhibit D](#), a Data Quality Campaign survey of elements met by states to build and use data systems.

Ms. Guidera indicated that legislators throughout the country were dealing with an unprecedented situation because for the first time in many years, the states were dealing with two overwhelming environmental changes. The first change was that expectations were rising, and for the first time in history, states were being asked to educate every single child and to ensure that every single child graduated from high school with the skills needed for college and/or a career. Ms. Guidera said that had never been the expectation in the past and it

presented a significant change in expectations. The current educational systems had not been built to meet that expectation, and the states were in the midst of a major transition.

Ms. Guidera noted that some resources such as funding were tighter than in the past; therefore, there were great expectations without resources. But even with fewer resources, the goal was to improve student achievement and outcome. At the same time, there were other goals to improve efficiencies, improve system performance, reduce the burden, and increase transparency. Ms. Guidera stated that Nevada could not achieve those goals without using data effectively and efficiently and without the Legislature making informed decisions and changing the conversation regarding student achievement.

According to Ms. Guidera, Data Quality Campaign used data to improve student achievement, which was the bottom line—how to ensure that every child in the country was able to achieve at the highest levels and was able to graduate from high school ready for college and/or a career. The reality was that all pieces had to come together to attain that goal.

Data Quality Campaign had found that the conversation about data use in education was changing across the country, said Ms. Guidera. Many states had created data systems within education as compliance systems that would ensure the data would create a cash flow for education, and as such, the information failed to address student achievement. Ms. Guidera said that as data began to improve in the area of accountability because of the No Child Left Behind Act, there was greater transparency and a greater ability to disaggregate data. Ms. Guidera opined that the states were just starting to address the last element of using data for informed decision-making and using data to create a culture of continuous improvement.

Chairwoman Smith interrupted the presentation to advise the Committee and persons in the audience that the presentation ([Exhibit C](#)) was available on the Nevada Electronic Legislative Information System (NELIS).

Continuing her presentation, Ms. Guidera stated that the conversation was about how to change the way states defined teacher effectiveness, measured teacher effectiveness, and ensured that systems were designed and aligned so that exit standards for high school and entrance standards for the workforce and postsecondary education were also aligned. The question was how to ensure that the system would provide feedback from postsecondary institutions back to K-12 schools. Ms. Guidera stated that making sure performance improved throughout the system and making sure that teachers were

appropriately serving children at home and in the classroom would be impossible if the appropriate data was not available.

According to Ms. Guidera, across the country and in Nevada, educational information would be made available for the first time. The conversations that were being held in Nevada and across the country were demanding different types of data, and states could no longer use information from a single area. Ms. Guidera said the conversations about using data in education had to include information about the degree that high school math grades were predictors of readiness for college-level math; what industries were employing the most high school and college graduates; and how successful were college graduates in the workforce according to major and education. Those questions required that information be pulled from different sectors, said Ms. Guidera, and those were traditional sectors that had not communicated in the past.

For the first time, said Ms. Guidera, infrastructure had been built in a majority of states that allowed states to pull appropriate data that would answer the questions, determine how the states were performing in education, determine how states were using taxpayers dollars to reap the best return on investments, and how each state's educational system was performing. The answers to those questions required information that not only followed individual students, but also followed those students over a period of time to produce longitudinal data.

Ms. Guidera said that increasingly throughout the country, each state had the capacity to produce longitudinal data. When Data Quality Campaign launched the data campaign in 2005, no state had a complete and robust longitudinal system to measure education. Ms. Guidera said when Data Quality Campaign released its survey of elements met ([Exhibit D](#)), 24 states had initiated what Data Quality Campaign considered a robust and complete longitudinal data system, and each state reported that by September 2011 those systems would be in place and operational.

According to Ms. Guidera, it was important to note that the elements most lacking in data systems across the country were the most critical elements for the conversations to address student achievement, similar to what was occurring in Nevada. Those conversations had to include the ability to connect teacher and student data information systems. Ms. Guidera noted that 17 states remained unable to link information systems, and those states lacked the ability to discuss teacher effectiveness or to measure and define teacher effectiveness as having any relation to student achievement.

The second element, said Ms. Guidera, was the ability to collect course-level information. She pointed out that 15 states were still unable to collect information on individual students regarding grades and courses attended. Those states were limited because they were unable to ascertain whether it mattered that students took an algebra 2 class and what effect that course might have on graduation rates and workforce preparedness. Without that type of information, predictive analysis could not be completed that ensured students were taking appropriate courses that would put them on the path to success.

Ms. Guidera said that 11 states were unable to connect K-12 and postsecondary data systems; therefore, there was no feedback in those states, and it was not known whether students were being provided an outcome that prepared them for life after secondary education.

Ms. Guidera said many states had invested the dollars to build the infrastructure for systems without changing the way data from those systems was used. Those dollar investments would be of no consequence if the states failed to ensure that actionable and timely information could be provided to stakeholders.

According to Ms. Guidera, Data Quality Campaign released its survey and also released information about how states were changing the conversation regarding the use of data. The first question was whether states were able to link data systems across the key areas of early learning, K-12, postsecondary education, and the workforce. The survey asked states about their ability to ensure that stakeholders had timely and appropriate access to data and what states had done to build data capacity and ensure that people knew how to use and/or access the information.

Ms. Guidera said the survey indicated that 43 states lacked the ability to follow an individual child and link data throughout K-12, postsecondary education, and the workforce. The survey also determined that 44 states still failed to provide timely information to students; however, for the first time, 30 states were providing information to teachers on individual students and Nevada was one of those states. Ms. Guidera indicated that only 10 states across the nation provided information about individual students to parents, and parents could not converse and make decisions about their child's education if student achievement information was not available.

Ms. Guidera reported that only one state had taken the necessary steps to ensure that educators had the capacity to access and use information. If states simply built data systems and failed to help educators understand how to use

the information to help them teach the students in their classrooms, then the systems had been built for naught.

Ms. Guidera said she would like to highlight issues that Data Quality Campaign believed were “game-changing” steps that Nevada should consider during the current Legislature. The first was to make sure the state was well poised to put into place the two elements lacking in the current data system. One element was the teacher-student data link. Ms. Guidera was aware that redefining teacher effectiveness was currently being discussed by the Legislature, and those conversations would be hindered without putting into place the ability to link teacher and student information in all levels of the education system. There was also the need to collect course information from American College Testing (ACT) scores and Advanced Placement (AP) scores, and link that information with individual students. That was the second piece that Nevada’s current educational system was missing.

Also, said Ms. Guidera, Nevada had to ensure that systems were linked, as recommended by the Governor’s Education Reform Blue Ribbon Task Force, which served as a roadmap for legislators. There was a need to pull together and consider the broader goals of the education system. Ms. Guidera commented that Nevada needed to breakdown the artificial silos that existed between K-12, postsecondary education, and the workforce data systems. She believed Nevada needed to define governance structures that would ensure information systems continued to flow and that stakeholders were aware that policies and systems were aligned to work toward the ultimate goal of ensuring that Nevada had an educated workforce and educated citizens.

Ms. Guidera stated that Nevada had to make sure it was a priority that parents, students, and teachers had access to appropriate longitudinal information. Persons could not be expected to change their actions if they did not have access to information and were not trained in the use of that information.

According to Ms. Guidera, other recommendations from the Governor’s Education Reform Blue Ribbon Task Force indicated it was critical to create policy about sharing data regarding teacher effect on student achievement with the schools of education that prepared those teachers. Currently, said Ms. Guidera, the schools of education were in the spotlight for not effectively preparing teachers. If the goal was to have an effective teacher in every Nevada classroom, the state had to look at the complete picture about how teachers were prepared and whether teachers were continually provided with the opportunity for educational development. The state had to provide feedback reports to the schools of education about how their graduates were performing,

as defined by the affect those graduates were having on student achievement. That information was not being shared in the majority of states, said Ms. Guidera, and schools of education in only two states currently received automatic feedback reports.

Ms. Guidera stated that when discussing the need to improve teacher effectiveness and make sure teachers knew how to use information to address student achievement in the classroom, it was vital for the state to change preservice, certification, and licensure requirements to indicate that educators knew how to use data as one of their core capacities.

Ms. Guidera said that as Data Quality Campaign had worked with other states, one of the key issues was that using data to improve student achievement was not an information technology (IT) issue, but rather it was a policy issue. The states that were able to leverage and use data systems most effectively were those where the changes were championed at the policy level, and information about the use of data systems was embraced as part of the policy discussion. Ms. Guidera encouraged Nevada to learn from that experience that the highest levels of leadership in the state needed to embrace the policy issue.

Also, said Ms. Guidera, defining student success was not about simply building a data system. She pointed out that data systems were never completed and required continued infrastructure upgrades to make sure that the system continued to meet the needs of the state. The real success at the end of the day was measured by people asking for and properly using that information. Ms. Guidera pointed out that there had been measurable change in how data systems were performing and how students were achieving.

Ms. Guidera said the success and sustainability of a data system could not be determined by a checklist. The system should be built as demand for the information grew and after it had been determined how information from the system was used and whether there was value in that information. That was the most important piece, because if there was no value in the information, it would not help persons make decisions, and the systems would not be worth maintaining. Ms. Guidera stated that a critical window of opportunity existed for Nevada policymakers to shift interest in the way educational data was used to ensure that every child was prepared for success.

Chairwoman Smith thanked Ms. Guidera for her presentation. She asked Mr. Cross to address the Committee, and explained that Mr. Cross was acquainted with educational issues in Nevada.

Christopher Cross, Chairman, Cross and Joftus, introduced himself to the Committee and stated that since 1998, he had worked on education in Nevada as a member of the Council to Establish Academic Standards for Public Schools (Council), where he had met several legislators. Mr. Cross said over that period of time he was able to better understand and become familiar with the state's educational data, the situation regarding student and educator performance, and the compelling need within the state to improve student achievement.

Mr. Cross said he had given a presentation to the Council every year about the state's educational data system and the need to improve that system. When the Data Quality Campaign commenced, it was an excellent opportunity to put data and student achievement into national context. For the past year, said Mr. Cross, he had worked as a "counselor" to the Governor's Education Reform Blue Ribbon Task Force. From his perspective, the ability to make the necessary decisions facing the Legislature would be enhanced by information about the success of investments in education, such as the Governor Guinn Millennium Scholarship Program, where longitudinal data could follow those students into the workforce. The current system in Nevada could not provide that longitudinal data and could not provide data about students in charter schools who continued on to public schools. Those were educational investments that were made by the state and local districts, said Mr. Cross, but there was no data to indicate the outcome of those investments. There was also no information available regarding the most effective use of resources to attain the best results for students in Nevada.

Mr. Cross believed that the data program as outlined by Ms. Guidera was very important in the context of reviewing how Nevada invested its resources and its commitment to enriching its educational data system.

Chairwoman Smith stated that after her acquaintance with Mr. Cross on the aforementioned Council, the constant message had been about the necessity of data in making informed decisions about student achievement. Everything that occurred in districts and schools should be based on data, and Chairwoman Smith believed the state had to develop a system to collect that data. She noted that the state had already made a significant investment in the current system for the collection of data.

Assemblyman Bobzien stated that fundamentally the discussion was not about an information technology (IT) issue, but rather it was a leadership and policy issue. He believed the information provided by Ms. Guidera should be considered when the Legislature discussed the state's promised education reforms, such as the creation of the Teachers and Leaders Council of Nevada



(Assembly Bill 222). Assemblyman Bobzien asked for additional information about other states that had followed a similar governance structure for the collection of data that brought together stakeholders, allowed access to the data, and showed how best to use that data. He also asked for a description of the role that data might play in the proposed Teachers and Leaders Council of Nevada.

Mr. Cross said some states had done an excellent job of having ownership in all elements of their data systems. The Data Quality Campaign had taken five representatives from Nevada to the state of Georgia to learn about that state's data system. Mr. Cross noted that Georgia was one of the states that had played a leadership role in the collection of data, along with the state of Florida. He indicated there would be a meeting on April 21, 2011, during which those five representatives from Nevada who represented the higher education community, the business community, and the K-12 community, would discuss what had been learned about Georgia's data system. Those representatives had returned to Nevada with a much greater understanding about the possibilities for the state in the area of data collection.

Ms. Guidera indicated that Nevada proposed the creation of a Teachers and Leaders Council that would allow broader stakeholder input regarding how teacher effectiveness would be defined and measured. Ms. Guidera informed the Committee that the Data Quality Campaign had compiled a folder that pertained specifically to teacher effectiveness, [Exhibit E](#), which she would make available to members. The exhibit also depicted what was needed in the area of data systems to measure student achievement and teacher effectiveness.

Ms. Guidera said the exhibit provided a good example of the use of data systems and explained why such systems were necessary. When the Data Quality Campaign was launched, it was widely thought that creation of teacher-student data links would complete the data system and allow management of teacher effectiveness. In working with the various states, the Data Quality Campaign discovered that most policymakers failed to understand the need to address other issues. Ms. Guidera said the data system would require that the state determine the statewide definition for the "teacher of record," so that all parties understood the guides and common definition, particularly when the "teacher of record" was ascribed certain values that would be defined.

Ms. Guidera said some states had a broad input process through a council, such as Tennessee, which had created a council and passed strong legislation that redefined teacher effectiveness measures and how those measures would be

accomplished. Tennessee had empowered its council over a nine-month period to determine the definition of the “teacher of record,” which was the point of the policy and technical piece that would determine how to measure teacher effectiveness. Ms. Guidera said it was important to ensure that the elements were aligned and working together, which had been the greatest challenge for states in their discussions about data systems. She explained that creating a data system that met the needs for retrieving data was a challenge for Nevada and every other state.

Ms. Guidera indicated that the states that were able to change their systems were those that included information technology (IT) personnel in broad-based conversations about data collection that would determine the best way to define teacher effectiveness. The goal was to determine the level of information available on current data systems and how those systems could be changed to ensure that policy and data were aligned and working together.

According to Ms. Guidera, there was a five-state pilot program currently working to capture the best thinking about how to define “teacher of record,” and there were examples of building teacher capacity once the teacher effectiveness piece was completed. It appeared that Nevada already had a broad-based open method of bringing stakeholders together, and Ms. Guidera encouraged the Legislature to include IT personnel as part of that conversation.

Assemblyman Bobzien stated that A.B. 222 was currently being considered by the Senate, and the legislation would create the Teachers and Leaders Council of Nevada. Assemblyman Bobzien said he was worried that there was not sufficient appreciation regarding the importance of that Council. He opined that the proposed Council would be a critical piece in the use of data to improve student achievement.

Assemblyman Hickey noted that there was an international ranking of countries in the area of education, and he asked whether other countries used data systems to measure teacher effectiveness or whether there were other reasons those countries were ahead of the United States in the field of education.

Ms. Guidera was not aware of educational data systems used by other countries. She was aware that some countries used a completely centralized system where every child had an identification number from birth; therefore, conversations about data systems were foreign to those countries because they already collected sufficient data. Also, those countries usually had centralized ministries of education where all information was linked. Ms. Guidera said there were other countries where information was completely decentralized and

everything was done at the provincial or district level, with no linked data systems.

Ms. Guidera did not know of any studies that had compared or ranked educational data systems among the various countries. However, most international research that depicted high performance or best practices in schools also indicated that the effective use of data was a key piece of those systems. Ms. Guidera said that countries where the culture had changed and information was valued usually produced the best results. She stated that every study, such as the study regarding the country of Finland, depicted success in countries that were using data efficiently at both the classroom and system levels to manage for results. The United States had forgotten how to manage for results in education because the data was not immediately available to assist with decisions. Most states had become so accustomed to not having data or having poor quality data that the ability to use quality data had simply been forgotten. Ms. Guidera indicated that policy and decisions had been made in the past based on anecdotes, hunches, or because it appeared to be the right action to take at the time.

Senator Cegavske said the concept from Data Quality Campaign was very exciting and she appreciated Ms. Guidera's presentation. Senator Cegavske had heard some testimony from the representatives that had visited Georgia, and that information had also been very exciting; she wondered whether Nevada could mirror the action taken by Georgia.

Senator Cegavske asked whether other states had looked at the performance of teachers and the growth of students to determine whether a teacher had been successful in all areas or whether a teacher needed to grow through additional education in a particular area.

Senator Cegavske indicated that Nevada had allocated countless amounts of money to the Department of Education to create a database, which she felt had not been successful. She also wondered about the cost for the data system.

Senator Cegavske said she had been very passionate about creating a successful P-20 (preschool through higher education) council that could review Nevada's educational structure and streamline the system. She hoped there could be simplistic yet thorough discussions about education that included all stakeholders rather than having different groups hold individual discussions.

Ms. Guidera pointed out that page 19 of [Exhibit C](#) depicted “Typical Data Reporting” that was used throughout the country, and that information was incomprehensible to the majority of parents and taxpayers. The exhibit also depicted data models from Arkansas and Colorado. Ms. Guidera explained that Colorado had made several investments in data collection as depicted on page 21 of the exhibit. For a cost of \$250,000, other states could use Colorado’s growth model, which allowed citizens to actually become aware of what was occurring in education in their state. The simplistic nature of the model would convey the needed information to teachers without using such instruments as Excel spreadsheets.

The beauty of using Colorado’s “SchoolView” growth model, which Ms. Guidera believed was the best depiction of data in the country at the present time, was that it took pediatric growth chart information that parents understood and applied that information to academic proficiency. The model showed not only growth in proficiency, but teachers could single out students in their classroom and view the progressive changes. Ms. Guidera opined that \$250,000 was a very good price for the use of Colorado’s model.

Senator Cegavske asked whether the cost of \$250,000 for the model was a one-time cost, or whether there would be an annual fee. Ms. Guidera said there were no additional fees, and once the information had been downloaded the system would belong to Nevada. The current trend throughout the country was that not every system had to be developed by each state. There was no need to start from scratch to develop a model because Colorado had already gathered the information and developed the model, which could be adapted and used by Nevada. Ms. Guidera said 16 states were currently signed up to use Colorado’s model. The exciting thing was that the states currently working with Colorado’s “SchoolView” model would become part of a consortium that could follow students and conduct comparisons across state lines. For example, said Ms. Guidera, feedback reports could be received about a graduate from a Nevada high school who attended college in Oklahoma. The use of an existing model opened many different doors and allowed different synergies.

Ms. Guidera stated the issue was how Nevada would act on the data that would be available, and one critical action was feedback to the schools of education. She explained that the National Center for Educational Achievement (NCEA) had conducted a research study of the schools of education in Texas approximately five years ago. Ms. Guidera said Texas had one of the best data systems in the country and was able to provide information that depicted the teacher’s effectiveness and student achievement with the

schools of education. The NCEA was worried about how the schools of education would react when they reviewed the results of the study, which indicated that some schools of education were not doing as well as others. However, said Ms. Guidera, it was discovered that the schools of education wanted to know and learn from what was occurring at other schools that had phenomenal teacher results. Ms. Guidera believed that was also part of the culture change because it changed the conversation that depicted data as a "hammer" to one that depicted data as a "flashlight." The culture change included ways to use the information, particularly by the schools of education and the educators themselves, as a tool to better performance and the performance of students.

Ms. Guidera explained that the most compelling statement she had heard over the past several years about the use of data was made by a math resource teacher at an elementary school in Ohio. The teacher was in a district that provided longitudinal data, and the teacher stated that she would not know how to actually allocate her resources without access to good data. Ms. Guidera pointed out that all teachers were not exceptional in all areas, and without student and teacher data that depicted the areas in which teachers were exceptional, school districts would not know how to assign students to the appropriate teachers.

Ms. Guidera indicated that an ideal system would be one that was able to meet the needs of the student and the teacher, and one that empowered the teacher to make decisions based on data. Among the worst things that could happen was that teachers were given the data without the appropriate training about how to use the data and they were not allowed to act on the data.

Regarding a P-20 council, Ms. Guidera said there were some incredible examples regarding governance structures, and she would provide that information to the Committee. The states that had created charters that defined governance of data systems were the states in which alignment conversations were taking place, and those were the states that saw results because they considered the entire system.

Mr. Cross added that the Governor of the state of Washington had proposed the creation of a single state agency and governing board for P-20 education. There were other states considering similar action, and Florida and New York had already created that type of governance structure. Mr. Cross believed that the "bright lines" that existed between the various levels of education were being eliminated. That was partly because of technology and partly because of the demand that students be educated to meet future workforce needs so they

could become productive citizens. Mr. Cross said the idea of streamlining governance structures had taken hold around the country.

According to Mr. Cross, one issue that was clear about a teachers and leaders council was the ownership of the governance structure created by the council. Those who had not participated in the teachers and leaders council would not care about the outcome regarding data policy and use. The establishment of a council required people who were committed to the end results of data policy and the proper use of data information. Mr. Cross said there had been significant data generated over the past few years, but there had not been an effective use of that data. There was also no understanding about how to ask the questions that could be answered by the data. That meant there needed to be sophisticated users and sophisticated persons in the policy environment to understand what the data could tell them and how it could be used.

Assemblywoman Mastroluca asked for clarification regarding the state that was actually training its stakeholders to use longitudinal data.

Ms. Guidera said the state of Oregon had the strongest professional development program in the country. The program consisted of stakeholders breaking down barriers and working to redefine how teachers were trained, both in preservice and while in service. The program in Oregon also worked with school boards and teachers to create a sense of ownership of the data system. Ms. Guidera said the Data Quality Campaign had conducted case studies regarding the Oregon program and she would provide information to the Committee.

According to Ms. Guidera, Florida was the only state that received credit for "State Action 9: Educator Capacity to Use Data" ([Exhibit E](#)), because Florida had changed its licensure and certification process to value teacher use and proficiency in accessing and using data. Florida also provided automatic information back to the schools of education; Ms. Guidera noted that there were several pieces to "State Action 9."

Ms. Guidera said states that received credit for "State Action 9" were those that provided professional development for teachers, changed licensure and certification processes, and made sure there was a feedback loop between the K-12 system and the schools of education so the data could be used for the continued improvement of education. Ms. Guidera said that area required a great deal of attention, and the educator community was "hungry" for longitudinal data systems, particularly the younger teachers. Those younger teachers had grown up using electronics, and they were used to instantly

accessing information almost everywhere, except when they were hired as teachers and discovered there was little or no access to data. The Data Quality Campaign believed that incoming pool of teachers who were demanding access to information would drive the culture change toward the better use of data.

Assemblyman Aizley asked what type of additional information or data that was not currently available could become available regarding a high school graduate once that student left high school; he asked for examples of the type of data that could be collected.

Ms. Guidera explained that a significant amount of data was currently being collected. In an ideal world, the data would follow a student through his or her grades and courses and would indicate how that student had performed, not only on high school testing but also on college-readiness testing. The data would include information about the student's teachers and whether the student completed high school or dropped out of school and for what reasons. Ms. Guidera said systems should follow the student into college or the workforce either in-state or out-of-state; current systems only followed students within the state. The system would also provide feedback reports regarding whether a student required remediation.

Ms. Guidera indicated that the data system should provide valuable information to policymakers regarding whether they had succeeded as stewards of taxpayer dollars and whether the state had received a return from investment on that student, based on the commitment to support that student from kindergarten through graduation from a Nevada high school with the ability to face future challenges.

Ms. Guidera said she would argue that without that type of information, there would be no idea about how a student had performed during school because there would be no feedback. As recently as five years ago, school systems had no data regarding why students dropped out of high school, and such data now provided a much different view of the situation. Ms. Guidera said it was important to note that it was aggregated data, and there was no perception of what constituted viable information. She emphasized that most policymakers had asked that the information be aggregated and very safe. However, said Ms. Guidera, it was important that key people along the way had access to the information such as parents, teachers, and the student so that the student would be aware of whether or not he or she was on track to be successful.

Ms. Guidera stated that was the real power of data systems: rather than simply gathering data about high school dropouts, the data could be used to address

possible problems in earlier grades so that the student, the parents, and the teachers could take action that might change the outcome for that student.

Assemblyman Aizley referred to Ms. Guidera's remark about a student requiring remediation, and he did not think that information would be included in a high school database. He also asked how information could be linked.

Ms. Guidera said it was necessary for the K-12 and postsecondary systems to link and share information. Florida was the only state that housed K-12 and higher education data in one system, and other states required a link to share that information. Ms. Guidera stated that the information requested by policymakers in the state of Minnesota was postsecondary success and K-12 education, which had been accomplished by marking 15 data links throughout the system to attain that information.

Assemblyman Aizley asked about states that had initiated longitudinal data systems so he could research the issue. Ms. Guidera replied that along with Oregon, the states of Washington, Georgia, and Minnesota had initiated longitudinal systems, and there were many examples available. She stated that she would present additional information to the Committee. The idea was not to think of silo pieces of the system, but rather to realize that the state would never be successful until the K-12 and higher education systems worked together and viewed that as the common goal of achievement.

Chairwoman Smith took a moment to acknowledge lobbyist Russell Rowe and his school-aged daughter in the audience; she pointed out that Mr. Rowe's daughter was one of the students for whom policymakers would make decisions regarding longitudinal data.

Chairwoman Smith wondered whether the data system could connect professional development of the teacher to student achievement to determine the effectiveness of professional development.

Mr. Cross explained that data systems could link professional development to student achievement. He believed that one of the major strengths was that the systems could also connect student achievement to preservice education of teachers and determine how that related to performance and future needs. Mr. Cross said it was crucial to understand the context and how that related to the various elements and to feed that information back into the system. For a principal or school superintendent, said Mr. Cross, the knowledge of where teacher investments needed to be made would ensure the best returns for the



children in the classroom. It was important for legislators to know how to invest the state's resources to produce the best results.

Chairwoman Smith agreed, and noted that Nevada had made a significant investment in its Regional Professional Development Program (RPDP) over the years. Chairwoman Smith was proud of the fact that Nevada had invested in the RPDP and had been able to sustain that investment. However, the focus of the RPDP had remained on core subjects, and she believed there should be a data system that indicated whether or not that was the proper focus for professional development.

Chairwoman Smith pointed out that the majority of teachers in Nevada had not been hired from Nevada schools of education, and she asked how data system information could be shared with out-of-state schools of education.

Mr. Cross said that had been historically true, but with the change in the demographics of the state because of the decrease in population, he believed that dynamic might change over time. For the first time, the state had a chance to receive information about teacher preservice and to initiate a much more coherent data system. Mr. Cross acknowledged that approximately 90 percent of Nevada's teachers had been hired from out-of-state schools of education during the peak years. He believed that the investment in professional development for teachers to remain current had to be leveraged in a proper manner. Mr. Cross said the state could begin to learn much more about the characteristics of those teachers through a licensing process that depicted what course work out-of-state teachers had completed.

The feedback to schools of education was crucial, said Mr. Cross, and there was no reason why that feedback could not occur with schools located outside Nevada. Although hiring had consisted largely of out-of-state teachers, there were some institutions that had acted as "feeder" institutions for teachers for the state and some school districts. Mr. Cross said that information could be provided back to the schools of education, even though the state was not producing the majority of its teachers.

Chairwoman Smith asked what action the state should consider and the status of the current data system.

Ms. Guidera said her outside view of Nevada's data system was that it was very critical for the state to ascertain stakeholder needs and listen to those needs. The state could then create a roadmap for the data system to ensure that the system met the needs of its potential users. She reiterated that the

state should create a conversation among the users of the system that detailed the information needed for users to better their job performance, whether that job was a teacher, a parent, a principal, a policymaker, or an administrator of a large school district. Ms. Guidera opined that until the data systems were transitioned for use, they would remain accountability systems that could not provide the information needed to determine the outcome of student investments.

Ms. Guidera reiterated that the conversation about data systems should be about a demand-driven system rather than a supply-driven system. The first step was to determine what type of information was needed from the system, determine the accessibility of the current system, and determine why the data system could not have the ability to produce course information. Asking for input from IT personnel who were familiar with data systems was important, along with creating a governance structure for the data system, so that one body presided over the conversations. Ms. Guidera explained that Data Quality Campaign discovered that the states that had been able to build a P-20 council were able to determine what information was needed and how the council could ensure that the data and data systems were available to stakeholders in a manner that addressed the questions.

Ms. Guidera said her quick answer would be to create a governance structure that allowed the conversations to be ongoing, but that had authority and would make the decisions about how the data and system were used. The second piece was to make sure that the systems were built for use. The only way that could be done was to continue to engage stakeholders in conversation to determine what information was needed from the system for stakeholders to be effective on the job.

Assemblyman Kirner said it did not appear that Nevada was managing data. He hoped that the focus of the data system would be on improving teacher effectiveness rather than identifying bad teachers that the districts wanted to fire.

Senator Denis commented that Nevada had to make a commitment to view data as a critical informational and processing piece. The commitment should be not only to produce and maintain the data, but to train stakeholders to use the data. Senator Denis said the data should be used for a daily process to move forward.

Chairwoman Smith agreed. She was concerned about the sustainability of funding for the system. She was pleased because the state had managed to sustain some funding for the current data system, which had included sizeable

federal grants. Chairwoman Smith noted that the state had funded parent reports from the current data system, which she thought provided clear information to parents. One of the first items cut when budget reductions were required was the information to parents report about how their children were performing and what might be done to assist children in improving their performance through use of available resources.

Chairwoman Smith commented that because of time constraints, the Committee would have to adjourn. She noted that Ms. Guidera would present information to the Joint Assembly and Senate Committees on Education later today. She advised Committee members who wanted additional information that they could request a meeting with Ms. Guidera and Mr. Cross, and members could also attend the planning session scheduled for April 21 at the Capitol Annex.

Senator Cegavske informed the Committee that she had recently received email information that Dwight Jones, Superintendent of Clark County School District, was in the process of implementing the Data Quality Campaign program. Senator Cegavske thanked Ms. Guidera and Mr. Cross for their presentation.

Ms. Guidera reiterated that she would provide copies of [Exhibit E](#) to members of the Committee, and she would be happy to provide additional information to members upon request.

Chairwoman Smith opened public comment.

Amanda Haboush, Nevada Institute for Children's Research and Policy, School of Community Health Sciences, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, advised the Committee that if a new data system was initiated, the Legislature should create policy that allowed university students and staff who were trained in information analysis to have access to that data system. University students and staff could be used as an additional resource for analyzing data and could answer questions without the need for additional funding to hire staff for that purpose. That was one way the community and the Nevada System of Higher Education could partner to retrieve additional information from the data system.

Also, said Ms. Haboush, the effects of information provided by the data system would not be immediate, and the state should continue to make the investment in the data system so that over the long run the state would have access to information about teacher effectiveness and student achievement.

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Chairwoman Smith thanked Ms. Haboush for her testimony and asked whether there was additional public comment to come before the Committee. There being none, the Chairwoman closed public comment.

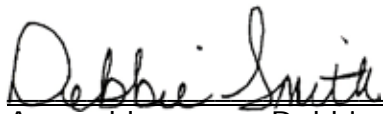
With no further business to come before the Committee, Chairwoman Smith adjourned the hearing at 8:48 a.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

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Carol Thomsen  
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:



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Assemblywoman Debbie Smith, Chairwoman

DATE: September 29, 2011

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Senator Steven A. Horsford, Chair

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**EXHIBITS**

**Committee Name: Assembly Committee on Ways and Means/Senate Committee on Finance**

**Date: April 20, 2011**

**Time of Meeting: 7:44 a.m.**

<b>Bill</b>	<b>Exhibit</b>	<b>Witness / Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>
	A		Agenda
	B		Attendance Roster
	C	Aimee Guidera, Data Quality Campaign	PowerPoint Presentation
	D	Aimee Guidera, Data Quality Campaign	Survey of Elements
	E	Aimee Guidera, Data Quality Campaign	Packet of Information