

**MINUTES OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION  
AND THE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**Seventy-sixth Session  
March 16, 2011**

The joint meeting of the Senate Committee on Education and the Assembly Committee on Education was called to order by Chair Mo Denis at 3:38 p.m. on Wednesday, March 16, 2011, in Room 1214 of the Legislative Building, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, Room 4412, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. [Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda. [Exhibit B](#) is the Attendance Roster. All exhibits are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

**SENATE COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Senator Moises (Mo) Denis, Chair  
Senator Ruben J. Kihuen, Vice Chair  
Senator Valerie Wiener  
Senator Sheila Leslie  
Senator Barbara K. Cegavske  
Senator Don Gustavson  
Senator Greg Brower

**ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Assemblyman David P. Bobzien, Chair  
Assemblywoman Marilyn Dondero Loop, Vice Chair  
Assemblyman Paul Aizley  
Assemblyman Elliot T. Anderson  
Assemblywoman Olivia Diaz  
Assemblywoman Lucy Flores  
Assemblyman Ira Hansen  
Assemblyman Randy Kirner  
Assemblywoman April Mastroluca  
Assemblyman Richard McArthur  
Assemblyman Harvey J. Munford  
Assemblywoman Dina Neal  
Assemblyman Lynn D. Stewart  
Assemblywoman Melissa Woodbury

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**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Pepper Sturm, Policy Analyst  
Brenda Erdoes, Legislative Counsel  
Billie McMenamy, Committee Secretary

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Zhan Okuda-Lim, Chair, 2010-2011 Nevada Youth Legislator, Clark County Senatorial District No. 5  
Haley Johnson, Vice Chair, 2010-2011 Nevada Youth Legislator, Capitol Senatorial District  
Taylor Beacham, 2010-2011 Nevada Youth Legislator, Clark County Senatorial District No. 9  
Alex Bybee, 2010-2011 Nevada Youth Legislator, Clark County Senatorial District No. 8  
Alexis Garduno, 2010-2011 Nevada Youth Legislator, Washoe County Senatorial District No. 4  
Erin Cranor, 2010-2011 Nevada Youth Legislator, Clark County Senatorial District No. 5  
Jordan Luttrell-Freeman, 2010-2011 Nevada Youth Legislator, Clark County Senatorial District No. 6  
Nichole Kereszt, 2010-2011 Nevada Youth Legislator, Clark County Senatorial District No. 7  
Alan Vo, 2010-2011 Nevada Youth Legislator, Clark County Senatorial District No. 12  
Keith W. Rheault, Ph.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education  
Caroline McIntosh, Superintendent, Lyon County School District; Chairman, Northwest Regional Professional Development Program  
Craig Hulse, Director, Government Affairs, Washoe County School District  
Bart Mangino, Clark County School District

**CHAIR DENIS:**

The bill establishing the Nevada Youth Legislature (NYL) was sponsored by Senator Valerie Wiener during the 2007 Session to provide a participatory learning experience for the State's most promising teenagers. Students are chosen by Nevada Senators to serve a one-year term, beginning June 1 of each

year. Members must be students in the tenth, eleventh or twelfth grade and be residents of the senatorial district from which they are appointed. These youth serve as liaisons between the Nevada Legislature and the youth of Nevada; they participate in meetings, develop legislation and conduct youth-focused public awareness campaigns. Each session, the NYL is authorized to submit one bill draft request (BDR) relating to the NYL scope of duties.

SENATOR WIENER:

The NYL was first developed to inspire civic engagement and education. There is a rigorous application process to become a youth legislator. The youth attend a three-day training program mirroring the training legislators receive. Each youth legislator is sworn in by a justice of the Nevada Supreme Court. The youth learn about the Supreme Court and Executive Branch as well as the Legislature. This year the Nevada Broadcasters Association was a sponsor that helped the NYL develop public-service announcements and had the youth participate in statewide radio shows. Each member is required, by statute, to have at least one town-hall meeting. Local government representatives taught the NYL about the jurisdictional differences between local and state government. They learned the role of lobbyists. They learned committee procedures and responsibilities. Mock hearings were held with State legislators. The NYL held meetings to review and select one BDR to be introduced this session. Only two states allot a BDR in this forum. The first NYL presented a bill on peer mentoring for civic engagement. The NYL held a floor session with a debate and a vote. During the three years of the NYL existence, it has received MarCom Awards honoring excellence in marketing and communication in 2008, 2009 and 2010; the Nevada Press Women public service award in 2009; the National Federation of Press Women award in 2009; the Communicator Award of Excellence in 2009; the Hermes Creative Awards in 2009; and the Communitas Awards for excellence in community service in 2010.

ZHAN OKUDA-LIM (Chair, 2010-2011 Nevada Youth Legislator, Clark County Senatorial District No. 5):

Thank you to the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) staff for all the support they have provided the NYL. I am a senior at Valley High School. This is my second year as a member of the NYL.

Because most students are not yet 18 years of age, they are unable to vote. It is vitally important that Nevada's youth have a voice in the decisions the

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Legislature makes, particularly regarding education, access to health care, public safety and other areas affecting youth. Through the NYL, we are able to provide the student's perspective to State Senators and Assembly members. The second NYL presented a joint resolution to amend the constitution to allow a state lottery. The third NYL has prepared a BDR concerning common core standards.

I encourage the Senate and Assembly members to work with the NYL.

CHAIR DENIS:

The Committee will now hear discussion on Senate Bill (S.B.) 14.

**SENATE BILL 14**: Requires the State Board of Education to develop a model curriculum for English language arts and mathematics. (BDR 34-609)

SENATOR WIENER:

Each of the 21 youth legislators brought a BDR to the NYL. Each bill was discussed and justified, and one BDR was selected for presentation.

HALEY JOHNSON (Vice Chair, 2010-2011 Nevada Youth Legislator, Capitol Senatorial District):

I support S.B. 14. The development of a model curriculum for English language arts and mathematics can help ensure students in Nevada receive a quality education. The education system in Nevada has been of concern. There are areas in the system in need of change without costing the State money it does not have. I maintain a 3.8 grade point average, rank 9th in my class and 90th in State standardized tests and am active in my school. Unfortunately, I rank only average in nationwide tests such as the SAT and ACT. My Nevada education has given me a false sense of security. Any student has the ability to learn; good teachers are the key. Teachers without a clear and unwavering path for the task at hand could use S.B. 14. Nevada and 47 other states participate in the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) which are internationally benchmarked standards designed to provide a clear understanding of what pupils are expected to learn. The CCSS need to be translated in a manner that will ensure teachers help all pupils master these new standards.

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MR. OKUDA-LIM:

Senate Bill 14 requires the State Board of Education (SBE) to establish a model curriculum for English language arts and math based upon the CCSS initiative. The SBE would provide this curriculum to the school districts, regional professional development programs (RPDPs) and the governing boards of charter schools. Teachers would be able to use this curriculum to develop lesson plans in conformance with the CCSS. This bill would be effective July 1, 2011.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN DIAZ:

Why did the NYL determine the SBE should develop the curriculum?

MR. OKUDA-LIM:

The responsibility would be the SBE's rather than local boards of education. The SBE works closely with the Department of Education (DE).

ASSEMBLYWOMAN NEAL:

Does Ms. Johnson believe S.B. 14 will help students become better than average students in their education?

MS. JOHNSON:

Yes, I do.

ASSEMBLYMAN STEWART:

How much is the fiscal note associated with S.B. 14?

MR. OKUDA-LIM:

The DE has placed the value of this fiscal note at zero.

ASSEMBLYMAN KIRNER:

Will standards in addition to English language and math need to be developed?

MR. OKUDA-LIM:

This bill would require the SBE to develop model curricula for English and math for kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12). Teachers do not always know the best way to impart knowledge to meet the standards. The staff at the DE has the expertise to develop the curriculum needed. Senate Bill 14 does not require that teachers use the model curriculum. Teachers should be able to apply

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creative license in their classrooms. The CCSS currently are for English and math.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

A study has shown most standards are taught only in elementary schools. It is not fair to compare Nevada's students with other states or internationally if Nevadans are not being taught the CCSS. We need to make sure universities provide teachers with the tools needed to teach the standards. Have you talked to any of the RPDPs?

MR. OKUDA-LIM:

I did speak to one RPDP representative regarding S.B. 14. The bill was positively received. There were no representatives from universities at our meetings.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

How can implementing S.B. 14 not require funding? Developing standards requires funding.

ASSEMBLYMAN MUNFORD:

Teachers have always had the course syllabi, received from the school district office, to make sure classroom standards were being met. Would S.B. 14 be duplication?

MR. OKUDA-LIM:

The CCSS in English and math were adopted December 9, 2010, by the SBE. The syllabi have not changed to meet the CCSS. The core curriculum recommended in S.B. 14 would be a reference, not a requirement, for use by teachers and administrators. State standards do not detail how to develop lesson plans to meet the CCSS.

TAYLOR BEACHAM (2010-2011 Nevada Youth Legislator, Clark County Senatorial District No. 9):

I support S.B. 14 to adopt a model curriculum for all of Nevada. The bill states in section 1 that the school districts shall make the model curriculum available. There may be a suggestion to change "shall" to "may." The purpose of the bill is defeated if it is optional for school districts to make the model available.

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ASSEMBLYWOMAN DIAZ:

Will a pacing guide be part of the model curriculum?

MS. BEACHAM:

The CCSS would be implemented throughout the State. Pacing would occur at grade level.

ASSEMBLYMAN MUNFORD:

Do you feel you received a quality education in Clark County?

MS. BEACHAM:

I moved from Orange County, California, to Clark County just before starting my freshman year of high school. The standards in Clark County are lower. The education process is different. Las Vegas is a transient melting pot which may affect the school standards.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

Could the Committee have a copy of the 21 NYL proposed BDRs?

SENATOR WIENER:

Yes, I will provide the information.

ALEX BYBEE (2010-2011 Nevada Youth Legislator, Clark County Senatorial District No. 8):

I support S.B. 14. Consistency in education should be a priority. There is a staggering margin between a great teacher and a good teacher. Every student should be afforded the opportunity of a diverse curriculum with quality teachers for every subject. An ill-equipped teacher could refer to the model curriculum proposed in S.B. 14. The NYL's actions in S.B. 14 were bipartisan. Amending section 1, subsection 4, from "shall" to "may" shatters the consistency the NYL seeks in developing the model curriculum.

ASSEMBLYMAN HANSEN:

I have a problem with S.B. 14 being mandatory. There are 17 school districts in Nevada. There is tremendous diversity in Nevada. One curriculum applied to every student removes the flexibility needed in this State.

MR. BYBEE:

The NYL agrees there should be teacher autonomy in the classroom. The only mandatory requirement in S.B. 14 is the SBE must develop and distribute the model curriculum. The bill does not mandate that teachers follow the curriculum. The grading system is unfair; a high grade from an easy teacher is not equivalent to a high grade from an effective teacher.

ALEXIS GARDUNO (2010-2011 Nevada Youth Legislator, Washoe County Senatorial District No. 4):

I support S.B. 14. Education is a gateway for students to increase the number of their future opportunities. The intent of this bill is to allow each student equal access to a quality education. The teachers at the private school I attend responded positively to the concept of a model curriculum. The concerns raised by these teachers, such as autonomy, have been addressed in S.B. 14. This bill is a step to decrease the discrepancies between the quality of education evident in differing regions in Nevada.

ERIN CRANOR (2010-2011 Nevada Youth Legislator, Clark County Senatorial District No. 5):

I support S.B. 14. Many teachers do not know how to incorporate the CCSS in their day-to-day instruction. Students who move between school districts should experience consistency in education and be held to equal standards.

SENATOR WIENER:

Ms. Cranor gathered statistical information and letters of support for S.B. 14 at an emergency town hall meeting she held in her district. This information was supplied to my colleagues to show how important education is to the young people in this State.

JORDAN LUTTRELL-FREEMAN (2010-2011 Nevada Youth Legislator, Clark County Senatorial District No. 6):

I support S.B. 14. This bill provides an effective model for veteran educators to help teachers dealing with dwindling resources.

NICHOLE KERESZT (Nevada Youth Legislator, Clark County Senatorial District No. 7):

I urge your support for S.B. 14. The model will be especially helpful to new teachers and experienced teachers who have not taught a particular subject.



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ALAN VO (2010-2011 Nevada Youth Legislator, Clark County Senatorial District No. 12):

I support S.B. 14 and concur with previous statements made by other youth legislators. The education received in Nevada's various school districts does not appear to be similar.

KEITH W. RHEAULT, PH.D. (Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education):

I support S.B. 14. The statutes are clear on authority at the State and district levels regarding how curriculum is taught. The SBE is authorized to adopt courses of study as well as standards for those courses. That is what has been done through the National Governors Association Common Core Standards (NGA CCS) in English and math. The statutes are also clear that it is the school districts' responsibility to implement standards through their curricula. This bill follows that line of responsibility. The NGA CCS has been adopted by 43 states. The SBE is working with those states to develop materials. There is a work group comprised of university representatives, RPDPs, curriculum specialists and teacher representatives to oversee the development of those materials. Even though it will be optional for teachers to use this information, it will be of such high quality the teachers will want to use the curriculum.

Standards have been mandated in Nevada since 1997. Every seven years, following the textbook adoption cycle, standards are revised. The Council to Establish Academic Standards reviews the standards before they are adopted. The State has never applied a fiscal cost to school districts when the standards are revised. Whether Nevada adopts the NGA CCS or not, the math standards are up for revision in 2012, and the school districts would have to implement those revisions. We plan to work closely with other states and share any cost. The little it will cost will be federally funded. Since the English and math standards would be revised anyway in the next two years, no State appropriation for implementation of S.B. 14 is required. The curriculum would be provided to the school districts on the DE's Website.

CHAIR BOBZIEN:

Will the DE review and revise the NGA CCS for use in Nevada?

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DR. RHEAULT:

That is correct. The states have decided to share any materials developed. Nevada will use, at no cost, what is deemed appropriate.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

Has the SBE ever developed standards?

DR. RHEAULT:

We have not developed curriculum in all cases for the standards. We have put out some materials for teachers use in implementing the standards. We have had State requirements to develop guidelines, such as for testing, where we have provided sample tests. It is not normally a mandate. We would have developed curriculum for the new CCSS without this bill.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

In the past, highly qualified professionals were hired to develop standards. Is the SBE developing all of the NGA CCS without outside professional help?

DR. RHEAULT:

The SBE has adopted the NGA CCS. They will be the same as they are in Ohio, Tennessee and Texas.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

I am trying to distinguish between adopting and developing the standards.

DR. RHEAULT:

Senate Bill 14 requests the SBE develop model curriculum to match the standards in all grades. If Nevada had to develop these standards, there would be a cost because there would be separate materials for K-12 in reading, writing and mathematics. By working with the 43 other states adopting the NGA CCS, the standards will be the same in Nevada as elsewhere. Nevada can exceed the standards and have different items in the curriculum; there will not be a big rewrite.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

The school districts usually produce the syllabi and the benchmarks; they do not produce model lessons. Will there be a cost to the school districts to teach the

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teachers, or will the districts be able to use the RPDPs to teach the model lessons?

DR. RHEAULT:

We are working with the RPDPs so they will be ready and able to assist in implementation.

ASSEMBLYMAN STEWART:

I have worked on the development of a syllabus. There are classes specific to Nevada—for instance Nevada History. How can these standards be implemented by July 1, 2011?

DR. RHEAULT:

July 1, 2011, is the effective date of S.B. 14. Implementing standards was part of our Race to the Top application to the U.S. Department of Education. We will be using a phase-in approach; next year we will implement new reading standards in kindergarten through the eighth grade and math standards in kindergarten through the second grade. It will take three years to phase in through the twelfth grade to make sure the materials are developed and teachers are trained in an appropriate manner. The states have not yet agreed to work together on other topics such as science, history and social studies. There is some interest at the national level for science.

ASSEMBLYMAN STEWART:

In addition to having common core standards and curriculum, will there be a common graduation standard, a common exit test and a common number of credits required to graduate in order to compare Nevada to other states accurately?

DR. RHEAULT:

We have joined a common-core assessment consortium with 32 other states. The federal government has provided \$175 million to develop a common assessment for K-12 based upon the NGA CCS. There probably will never be one common proficiency level for every state. There has been nothing in the consortium's discussions regarding credit requirements for graduation or a graduation standard.

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ASSEMBLYMAN AIZLEY:

Are there enough mathematicians to teach the standards? Will there be a separate certification for math teachers for Grades 10 through 12?

DR. RHEAULT:

Nevada has had a hard time filling those positions. We do use some long-term substitutes. The math standards have been upgraded which is why we have chosen to phase in those standards during the third year. There will not be a separate certification. The current teachers are endorsed at the secondary math level, qualified up through calculus. The Commission on Professional Standards in Education may have to look at the current requirements for math to see if they need to change.

ASSEMBLYMAN HANSEN:

The NYL believes the current curriculum is substandard, yet we are asking the same body to choose the new standard. Why would we want the same body that did poorly setting the standards to create new standards?

DR. RHEAULT:

The NGA CCS are higher level; experts in the country developed them, and national and international benchmarks were used. The NYL stressed the lack of uniform teaching to the standards, possibly because there were no materials or a good interpretation of how the standards should be taught. The model curriculum available in S.B. 14 will improve consistency across the State.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN NEAL:

In 2005, certain principals were using the 1998 curriculum for math; the curriculum was changed creating a gap in knowledge. What strategies are in place for the CCSS by 2014?

DR. RHEAULT:

The high school proficiency requirements are aligned to the standards adopted. An adequate time is given to cover the lag between implementation and testing. The State requires three credits in math to meet the standards without stating which specific math courses are required such as algebra 1, algebra 2, and geometry. Phasing in the high school last ensures there is adequate time to work with school districts to adjust the available courses and provide training to teachers.

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ASSEMBLYWOMAN NEAL:

Are higher level math classes available in the high schools?

DR. RHEAULT:

Not all students take algebra 2; there are other math courses which meet the math requirement.

ASSEMBLYMAN ANDERSON:

Nevada does not rank well nationally in education. Do you believe S.B. 14 is a policy which should be implemented?

DR. RHEAULT:

I have been a strong supporter of participation in the consortium, particularly in English and math. Expectations should be the same globally. Using the NGA CCS saves funds. I support the common assessment, something Nevada could not afford to do on its own, which will be available online and could be used to compare Nevada to other states choosing to adopt the common assessments.

CAROLINE MCINTOSH (Superintendent, Lyon County School District; Chairman, Northwest Regional Professional Development Program):

The Lyon County School District (LCSD) supports S.B. 14.

I have been involved with all of Nevada's RPDPs. The school districts are relying on the RPDPs to provide professional development. The LCSD is using federal Education Jobs Fund money for common-core positions. It will take a tremendous amount of resources to provide the professional development needed. Increased rigor is required to meet the math standards. I will be working with the Nevada System of Higher Education to provide the appropriate professional development, especially in mathematics.

CRAIG HULSE (Director, Government Affairs, Washoe County School District):

Curriculum is developed at the school district level. The Washoe County School District (WCSD) appreciates the model curriculum being developed with the other 43 states. The WCSD has about 15 people developing curriculum based upon the specific needs of the students in Washoe County. The WCSD would use the model curriculum developed by the SBE to develop curriculum specific to Washoe County.

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The proposed amendment requests we not be forced to duplicate efforts by providing dual sets of curricula to meet the CCSS.

BART MANGINO (Clark County School District):  
The Clark County School District supports the intent of S.B. 14.

CHAIR DENIS:  
We will close the hearing on S.B. 14 and open the hearing on S.B. 237.

[SENATE BILL 237](#): Revises provisions governing the Nevada Youth Legislature.  
(BDR 34-9)

SENATOR WIENER:  
The NYL has subsisted for the last three years on a \$35,000 investment and volunteers from the Legislature and the LCB staff. The Civic Mission of Schools provided an additional \$35,000 which is in reserve. The NYL would appreciate General Funds, as available, but our intention is to address the resource needs of the NYL through volunteerism and private donations. A mechanism to create a board and to collect gifts, grants and donations is included in S.B. 237.

BRENDA ERDOES (Legislative Counsel):  
As part of the LCB nonpartisan staff, I do not urge or oppose legislation, but will explain it.

Section 6, page 3, of S.B. 237 provides for the administration of the NYL by a corporation for public benefit. Section 5, page 2, creates a fund to be administered by this corporation for public benefit. Section 8 expands the term of each youth legislator to two years to match the biennium. The duties of the youth legislator have been expanded during the two-year term. Section 10, page 5, tightens the requirements relating to absences allowing vacancies to be quickly filled. Section 9, page 4, expands the eligibility to ninth graders. Section 15, page 8, extends the reversion period to 2013. Section 16, page 8, directs the Legislative Commission to form the corporation. Section 17, page 8, provides for the transfer of remaining funds to the newly created Nevada Youth Legislature Fund.

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SENATOR WIENER:

The board would coordinate with the Legislative Commission and the LCB. Section 6 of S.B. 237 states there would be five members of the board of directors. I am considering an amendment changing the number on the board to "at least 5 but not more than 11."

ASSEMBLYMAN AIZLEY:

Is there an office or someone who handles the funds, or is that function filled by the LCB? Would it be possible to "sweep" those funds?

MRS. ERDOES:

The LCB has a separate fund for the NYL.

ASSEMBLYMAN AIZLEY:

Is there a need for an executive director?

SENATOR WIENER:

Some day it could get so big there would be a need. The emphasis has been on the use of volunteers. It is difficult to secure financial support under the NYL's current structure.

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CHAIR DENIS:

The hearing on S.B. 237 is closed. There being no public comment or further business to come before this Committee, we are adjourned at 5:47 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

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Sandra Small,  
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

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Senator Mo Denis, Chair

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

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Assemblyman David P. Bobzien, Chair

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



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<u>EXHIBITS</u>			
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