

**MINUTES OF THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**Seventy-sixth Session
February 9, 2011**

The Senate Committee on Education was called to order by Chair Mo Denis at 3:37 p.m. on Wednesday, February 9, 2011, in Room 2149 of the Legislative Building, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, Room 4412E, 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.

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

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Pepper Sturm, Policy Analyst
Billie McMenamy, Committee Secretary

OTHERS PRESENT:

Keith W. Rheault, Ph.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction, Department of Education
Dr. William E. Roberts, Superintendent, Nye County School District

CHAIR DENIS:
We will open the meeting.

PEPPER STURM (Policy Analyst):
A copy of the "Senate Committee on Education Rules for the 2011 Session" ([Exhibit C](#)) is before you for your review.

SENATOR WIENER MOVED TO ADOPT THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION RULES FOR THE 2011 SESSION.

SENATOR KIHUEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

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MR. STURM:

I would like to introduce the Committee Brief ([Exhibit D](#)) and the 2011 Nevada Education Data Book ([Exhibit E](#), original is on file in the Research Library). I have provided additional briefs as follows: Collective Bargaining ([Exhibit F](#)), History of Selected Components of Nevada's Public Elementary-Secondary Education Governance Structure ([Exhibit G](#)), Facts About Elementary-Secondary Education ([Exhibit H](#)), Class-Size Reduction ([Exhibit I](#)), Teacher Pay: Diversified Compensation Plans ([Exhibit J](#)) and Charter Schools ([Exhibit K](#)).

CHAIR DENIS:

The Superintendent of Public Education will make a presentation.

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

I have a presentation for your review: Status of K-12 Education in Nevada Talking Points Document ([Exhibit L](#)). Key points of demographics will come into play as we discuss reform issues. The amount of available federal program funding has been questioned and whether it will offset deficiencies in the State. The last item is our stance on the federal No Child Left Behind Act.

The Nevada Growth Model of Achievement (NGMA) takes us beyond a proficiency level and measures how a student grows from one grade to the next. The NGMA can enhance our statewide system of support to prekindergarten through twelfth grade educational achievement, focus on student progress, increase our understanding of what does and does not work, expand our vision of what is happening in schools and promote meaningful conversation across Nevada's educational community.

On June 2, 2010, the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers released a set of state-led

education standards, the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The English-language arts and mathematics standards for grades kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) were developed in collaboration with a variety of stakeholders including content experts, teachers, school administrators and parents.

SENATOR BROWER:

Our focus is the achievement. It does not matter where we have been, it is where we are now and whether we are improving.

DR. RHEAULT:

In 2006 and 2007, Legislature-funded school-improvement, remediation grants were provided to every school that applied. Each school had to address specifically how to use the money to improve student achievement in math and English at the school site level. Improvement continued in 2007 and 2008. Funding was not replaced in 2009. Federal funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 is no longer available to help bridge the gap from discontinued state funding. With a concentrated effort from each school—the principal, teachers and school-improvement plans—the focus is on improving student achievement. Although modest, we have seen a substantial improvement among our hardest-to-reach students.

SENATOR LESLIE:

Since that money will not come back, will the improvement continue?

DR. RHEAULT:

I do not know whether we can expect the percent gain. I have not seen a recent study, but I know Clark County has compared students who have been in the district less than three years. The students established in the district do much better than the new ones coming in.

SENATOR LESLIE:

Some of that money, as I recall, was used by schools to purchase programs and train teachers.

DR. RHEAULT:

A lot of the money was utilized for teacher training on professional development. The challenge is that teachers move on, so the effects of professional development get lost.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

I would like to address page 5 of the talking points document [Exhibit L](#). When I look at funding protection, I have always felt the Nevada plan was there for us. What do you have to say with regard to the "no" response under funding protections? In Nevada, we have a protection for funding K-12.

Dr. RHEAULT:

We have a guaranteed-per-pupil amount the State will make up if local revenues do not come in. We have no State policy protecting it, because in shortfall situations in Legislative Sessions, you can reduce per-pupil funding to take back money.

The next few pages list every federal program administered by the Department of Education (DOE). Over the years, a number of programs have been discontinued. One affecting my staff is the elimination of "Safe and Drug Free School Funding". It funded the only staff person to work with districts on safety, drug and discipline issues in the schools. There are no new programs on the horizon. Only the nutrition programs are being increased. They are on cost reimbursement. If we achieve 80 percent student participation, the U.S. Department of Agriculture will reimburse the State. We hope to see \$10 million to \$15 million each year in increased use in nutrition. This current biennium of the Recovery Act will provide federal funds in a number of program areas of technology, homelessness, school improvement, Title I programs and special education. We recently received \$82 million in education jobs funding; therefore, total funding is \$232 million. Those were one-shot programs that will not be added back. Districts have until September 30, 2012 to spend this funding. Other funding I mentioned for technology, school improvement, and special education ends this September and must be expended by then. We are \$232 million short of funding that got us through this past biennium.

SENATOR CEGAVSKE:

Please explain how many substitute teachers there are and how long a student may cumulatively be taught in his career by a substitute teacher. It can be one, two or three years, and we know the results of someone not qualified to teach. We are not keeping track. Districts are doing a bad job of providing us this information. I know it is not the fault of DOE. I plead with you this Session to get a handle on this data regarding substitutes. This is a huge issue for us. If the district is not willing to address it, it is DOE's responsibility with the state board to review and give us the information. I know those statistics will answer

some of our questions. Can you tell this Committee why it is so difficult to obtain the information and provide it?

Dr. RHEAULT:

I notice in the "2011 Nevada Education Data Book", [Exhibit E](#), data on substitute teachers is provided. On a daily basis, we review each school to determine how often students are exposed to substitute teachers, but keeping track by class proves difficult. We will try to answer your question this Session.

SENATOR WIENER:

One of my concerns, in visiting schools regularly for the past 12 years, is the significant impact of student movement. With each move from school to school to school, there is loss. Do you have any data on the impact on learning in that situation?

Dr. RHEAULT:

We do have a standardized definition of the transiency rate of students moving from one school to another. Our unique student identification provides tracking data. If the student is registered under one name in Las Vegas and shows up in Carson City, our system identifies that student. I have not reviewed the transiency rate this year.

SENATOR WIENER:

This data could impact the outcome if provided to this Committee.

DR. RHEAULT:

Definitely.

DR. WILLIAM E. ROBERTS (Superintendent, Nye County School District):

I am the newly elected president of The Nevada Association of School Superintendents. I represent approximately 6,000 students, 7 towns and 18,400 square miles in Nye County. We are the largest geographical school district in the continental United States. I plan to attend as many of these sessions as I can for the remainder of the 2011 school year.

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CHAIR DENIS:

We will now adjourn the Senate Committee on Education at 5:17 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Billie McMenamy,
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Senator Mo Denis, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBITS

Committee Name: Committee on Education

Date: February 9, 2011

Time of Meeting: 3:30 p.m.

Bill	Exhibit	Witness / Agency	Description
	A		Agenda
	B		Attendance Roster
	C	Pepper Sturm	Senate Committee On Education Rules For The 2011 Session
	D	Pepper Sturm	Senate Committee on Education 2011 Nevada Legislature Committee Brief
	E	Pepper Sturm	2011 Nevada Education Data Book
	F	Pepper Sturm	Collective Bargaining
	G	Pepper Sturm	History of Selected Components of Nevada's Public Elementary-Secondary Education Governance Structure
	H	Pepper Sturm	Facts About Elementary-Secondary Education
	I	Pepper Sturm	Class-Size Reduction
	J	Pepper Sturm	Teacher Pay: Diversified Compensation Plans
	K	Pepper Sturm	Charter Schools
	L	Keith Rheault, Superintendent of Public Instruction	Status of K-12 Education in Nevada