



Education Collaborative Advisory Board

Innevation Center
6795 S. Edmond Street
Las Vegas, NV 89118

September 14, 2015
11:30am - 1:30pm

- I. Welcome, Purpose, and Review April 20th Meeting Notes
- II. Guest Speakers
 - a. Brett Husson, *Nevada Succeeds*
 - i. K-12 Education Policy Updates
 - b. Catherine Lyons, Ph.D., *UNLV Department of Educational and Clinical Studies*
 - i. Early Childhood Advisory Council
 - c. David Damore, Ph.D., *UNLV Department of Political Science*
 - i. Higher Ed. Financing & Policy Issues for NV
- III. Identify Action Plan for Intermediate-Term goals and success
 - a. Review ECAB Priorities with currently undetermined action
- IV. Member Announcements
- V. Wrap Up
 - a. Next Meeting: December 14, 2015

Meeting Goals:

- ✓ Learn about various P-20 education issues
- ✓ Identify goals and success of ECAB priorities
- ✓ Identify education and community leaders to invite to future meetings

K-20 EDUCATION COLLABORATIVE ADVISORY BOARD

MEETING MINUTES

Date/Time: September 14, 2015; 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM
Location: Innevation Center

In Attendance:

Angela Silva (*Clark County School District*)
Gwen Marchand (*University of Nevada, Las Vegas*)
Victor Wakefield (*Teach for America, State Board of Education*)
Julie Pippenger (*Andre Agassi Foundation for Education*)
Laura Latimer (*College of Southern Nevada*)
Tiffany Tyler (*Nevada Partners*)
Robert Henry (*Clark County School District*)
Susie Lee (*Communities in Schools*)
Julie Williams (*Proxy for Adriane Zaniewski*)
Magdalena Martinez (*The Lincy Institute*)
Caitlin Saladino (*The Lincy Institute*)

Guest Speakers

Catherine Lyons (*UNLV Department of Educational and Clinical Studies*)
David Damore (*UNLV Department of Political Science*)
Brett Husson (*Nevada Succeeds*)

Not Present:

Ruben Murillo (*Nevada State Education Association*)
Edith Fernandez (*Nevada State College*)
Seth Rau (*Nevada Succeeds*)

Welcome

Dr. Martinez introduced the meeting materials to the members (agenda, meeting minutes, and deliverables chart). Dr. Martinez began by explaining the legislative session and the ways that Nevada Succeeds has helped to follow the money. She also pinpointed one of the issues ECAB members had identified as a priority: the early childhood education framework based on Dr. Sonya Horsford's brief. She noted that this was an area for discussion during this meeting, because there are significant connections between early childhood and high school completion. Dr. Martinez also reminded the board of their concerns with higher education funding. To address this interest, Dr. Martinez invited Dr. David Damore to speak with the board about his brief specifically looking at higher education funding in Nevada. Finally, she noted that we would discuss our upcoming plans of action (short term and intermediate term priorities). Finally, Dr. Martinez reviewed our last meeting and the speakers that we heard from, and how their presentations align with the deliverables chart. Dr. Martinez then introduced our guest speakers: Mr. Brett Husson, Catherine Lyons, Ph.D., and David Damore, Ph.D.

Guest Speakers:

Brett Husson, Nevada Succeeds:

Mr. Husson provided us with various K-12 Education Policy Updates. Mr. Husson began by giving us a look at the Weekly Update that is produced regularly by Mr. Rau, via nevadasucceeds.org, and also accessible via twitter. Mr. Husson explained how the weekly update is divided into sections related to charter, teacher pipeline, targeted funding, private choice, and other education changes. Dr. Martinez indicated that we were interested in spending and teacher pipeline primarily.

Mr. Husson spoke on the categorical funding piece, which took place in 3 bills. He noted that Victory Schools were a large victory because it gave funding dollars to Zoom Schools (intended to provide resources for intervention with ELL students). The Victory Schools were meant to mimic this model, but for low-income students. However, Mr. Husson noted that there were no parameters on accountability plan for Victory Schools. Each school over the summer was asked to develop a plan for using the dollars. Mr. Husson indicated that most people in the education reform community believe these steps are good ways to attract new life into the system. However, the key to these efforts will be tracking the money as it is given out. These are policy issues where Nevada Succeeds took the first step, but the follow up is key to the success.

Another issue being followed is ESAs, a bill that provides state education dollars to be used at private schools. This is currently facing lawsuits: one based on separation grounds (using state dollars for private school is a violation) and another based on a more narrow concern (the constitution says we require a unified system of schools). In the meantime, the treasurer's office is responsible for implementing this program. For children that want to take advantage, they need to be enrolled in CCSD for at least 100 days prior. It will be implemented starting January 1. It is going to be a reimbursement system, quarterly, so reimbursements will not come back until April. Mr. Husson noted that these programs should be used to help those who need it the most, but the way it is being implemented means that it will be difficult for low income families to actually take advantage of this. Mr. Husson noted that he is concerned about these policies, because while his organization is in favor of choice, the results in of Nevada's educational rankings are not brought down due to private school student performance.

Mr. Husson also discussed various aspects of the teacher pipeline. He noted that the *Teacher Leaders Fund* offers \$5000 through SB511, and will give scholarships to teachers. Mr. Husson suggested that this was addressed in a cursory way, and was put in at the end when they had the teacher leader crisis. The good news moving forward is that there are several projects that will be followed, according to Mr. Husson. For instance, *What's Next Nevada* is a project that addresses what happens if Governor Sandoval successfully obtains everything desired. While everyone might assume that the policies will fix the problems, Mr. Husson reminded that between policy and implementation there is a lot of "what's next." He noted that for any teacher pipeline effort, success would not be attained unless teachers are capable of providing the instruction necessary. Mr. Husson noted that Ross Miller, Mark Hutchison and other stakeholder leaders have constructed a 35 person advisory board for the *What's Next Nevada* project; from their efforts will emerge the 2017 policy agenda.

Mr. Husson then recapped on the CCSD reorganization bill (deconsolidation) based on

Assemblyman Gardner's work. This bill has formed a committee of legislators, whose job is to analyze what would look like to reorganize the school district. Mr. Husson stated that they would be responsible for forming advisory group that will be handpicked with technical knowledge. They are charged with answering if it can be done, and what are the financial implications? Mr. Husson noted that this committee will be meeting within the next 30 to 60 days, and will present their findings to the next legislative session. Whatever their findings are will become law, because that is how the bill was written. Mr. Husson suggested that this has the most potential to change the day-to-day operations of CCSD. At present, he has heard that instructionally, the 7 newly constructed precincts will be separate and can make local decisions for school calendar, but that other services would be maintained by the larger entity. Mr. Husson reminded board members that these committee meetings are public, and should be attended if any members are interested in this legislation.

At the end of Mr. Husson's presentation, the floor was opened up for questions. Dr. Marchand asked about the quality and implementation piece. She asked if Nevada Succeeds is monitoring and tracking the quality of the programs that are selected for money allocations. She also asked, once these programs are being implemented, will Nevada Succeeds be reporting out the results? Mr. Husson stated that these bills were passed with accountability measures in place. It is the State Department's responsibility to put out a third party evaluator. Mr. Husson indicated that Nevada Succeeds will be watching to see what sort of evaluation piece was implemented.

Mr. Wakefield asked about the SAGE commission about recommendations for government efficiency. Mr. Husson showed that the new version of the SAGE Commission is recruiting to get the best representatives on that commission. They will be the formal group that will be analyzing these policies. Dr. Marchand indicated her concern that there are various plans for each Victory School that may make it difficult to capture what is being done well. She noted that if we were going to ask someone to recreate it, it would be very difficult due to the fact that there are no accountability measures to the outcome of spending. Mr. Husson suggested that if things are passed at the end of June and need to be implemented in September, it makes it difficult to have an accountability measure in place. He noted that ultimately, the next chance to do it right will be during the next session.

Mr. Wakefield suggested that for Zoom Schools the state board needs to set accountability measures, because while we might have a wonderful policy, the implementation might be at risk because there is no accountability. Mr. Husson reminded that while a lot of people want to implement policy top-down, we must be mindful of considering how policy actors might implement it. Since the results of the bill are already in law, we have the mechanism to make sure that we are successful moving forward. Ms. Lee added how important it is that we assess what factors were successful, versus what was not. Ultimately, it is key to capture what mix of variables is best: full day kinder, interventions, etc. Mr. Husson echoed that there are 28 Zoom Schools that we have a chance to capture something with, but it will be difficult to make a summative assessment with so many variables. Dr. Martinez suggested that each ECAB member subscribe to the Nevada Succeeds weekly update. She also shared that NDOE and Nevada Dept. of Employment Services data is trying to be tracked as big data, but is about a decade old (2006).

Catherine Lyons, Ph.D., UNLV Department of Educational and Clinical Studies:

Dr. Lyons gave her presentation on the Early Childhood Advisory Council. This is a governor appointed council established through Assembly Bill 79 in 2009. They are committed to the first 8 years of life, and the system will support children and families in achieving their full potential. This came out of the Head Start Act, and board membership represents various stakeholders invested in the lives of children (i.e. community programs, mental health, private early childhood providers, etc.). There are 7 local councils that report out to the state council. In addition, the child care and development block grant has been around since 1990, and a big piece is that this subsidizes families so their children can attend community based programs with incentives; for example, the Lynn Bennett Education Center at UNLV accepts this funding.

Dr. Lyons also introduced ECAB members to “the petal chart” which is a diagram that has helped the Early Childhood Advisory Council to develop subcommittees. This is in place in order to help children physically have access to early childhood education, but also curriculum access and support access. Ultimately, the Council wants to make sure that we have support for children to be successful.

Dr. Lyons then discussed the various aspects of The Silver State Strong (S3) plan, which is designed to identify the goals for state wide early childhood education. Some of the key goals in this plan are to improve program quality and outcomes for children, provide more infrastructures for special needs early childhood education, and close the achievement gap for kinder readiness. One of the priorities of the S3 plan is “Silver State Stars,” which provides a mandatory rating system for early childhood providers. Some of the mandatory requirements are: childcare must be in good standing with child care licensing, must be registered with the child care subsidy program, and administrative staff has a true professional development plan in place.

Additionally, the rating system looks at other aspects, like meeting nationally recommended group sizes and teacher to child ratios, using an environmental rating scale, ensuring that directors meet educational requirements, and compliance with the National Association for the Education of Young Children. Another effort is to bring early childhood education data together into one place through the “Statewide Early Childhood Data System.” Kindergarten School Readiness is another item that has been piloted in order to assess how ready children are for kindergarten, across percentile scores. Silver State Skills is part of the Nevada Registry which is a professional development training site that has been put in place to help early childhood professionals set up career goals. The goal is to make sure that these trainings are of high quality and intentional. Other important programs include “Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education” (TEACH), which is a scholarship program in Nevada that funds up to \$4,000 a year if you are working in early childhood in the state. Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention (TACSEI) is another resource that provides support for addressing young children with challenging behaviors. Finally, Silver State Supports is dedicated to getting families involved in their children’s development; home visiting is a crucial part of this effort. In sum, “Silver State Strong” (S3) is an effort to develop how all this fits, and whether or not it belongs. Dr. Lyons concluded by stating that through all these efforts, the Council is working to create quality resources, and ultimately to reduce the achievement gap.

At the end of Dr. Lyon’s presentation, the floor was opened up for questions. Dr. Martinez asked about Nevada Kids Counts. Dr. Lyons said the chair of the Early Childhood Advisory Council works for the children’s cabinet, which provides data with a report on how many childcare

centers are available for families. She stated that we are currently not meeting the needs for the number of children. Dr. Martinez also suggested that ECAB members reference npwr.nv.gov as a place for data.

David Damore, Ph.D., UNLV Department of Political Science:

Dr. Damore then gave his presentation on the Higher Education Financing and Policy Issues for Nevada. His interests are in an ongoing project on Nevada's north versus south funding and outcomes. Dr. Damore spoke on his piece that was written about the deconsolidation of higher education to reorganize NSHE. He noted that when you look at finance in higher education, we have the most consolidated higher education structure. The three states that are closest to Nevada are Hawaii, Alaska, and North Dakota, which are significantly smaller in population.

Dr. Damore then transitioned into a discussion his brief overviewing the new funding formula. The Nevada funding formula for higher education is based on a cost structure that is derived from Florida, Ohio, and Texas, which was then applied to Nevada. This new funding formula has created a weighted student credit hour, which is meant to reflect the cost of a graduate versus undergraduate class. Again, Dr. Damore noted that this is problematic because the weighted student credit hour costs are made up numbers (from Florida, Ohio, and Texas). Another problem with the formula is that it treats every institution the same (UNLV to CSN to Truckee, etc.). The formula is based on the cost structure, but then adjusted based on differences that create carve outs based on no analysis. He noted that this results regional disparities, where Nevada State College and CSN end up with 2/3 of the funding that you would see at Great Basin or Western Nevada. While this is a vast improvement from the previous funding formula, Dr. Damore notes that it still is not equitable.

Dr. Damore feels that one of the major issues with the funding formula is the "Non-Formula Appropriations," where UNR is receiving considerably more funding in a line item titled, "Statewide Programs." Dr. Damore then showed that even in an attempt to be more equitable in higher education funding, UNR still obtained more funding than all the other institutions combined. His brief shows how the minority-serving, southern Nevada colleges and universities receive the least in weighted student credit hour. Ultimately, he noted that Nevada ranks 17th in per student state funding for higher education. Dr. Damore also noted that we have the lowest share of college degree, college going, graduation rates, and graduation efficiency. In the end, he views the problem through a highly centralized structural system that is trying to govern a state as diverse as Nevada based on a structure designed for South Dakota.

After Dr. Damore's presentation, the floor was opened up for questions. Mr. Husson asked about the committee for SB391. Dr. Martinez stated that the committee voted for more funding, in the form of 10 million dollars to be given out for challenge grants and workforce response, but no change was taken up. She noted that the negotiations that took place reflected that people did not want to deconsolidate. Dr. Damore pointed to Dr. Martinez's brief, which details a timeline of going through the process of revisiting higher education governance and funding in Nevada time and time again, with no real change. Mr. Husson asked if there was a political constituency pushing against the deconsolidation piece. Mr. Wakefield asked if university presidents have any power in the decision to deconsolidate. Dr. Damore indicated that the Chancellor and Chairman of the Board alone could remove a president. These are suggestions and issues to watch.

Final Comments

Dr. Martinez discussed the areas of the deliverables chart that need further suggestion from the ECAB board. She asked for feedback from the board based on the items discussed today and the deliverables chart. Dr. Martinez asked the board to make suggestions about ways to share our work with a larger audience (i.e. Op. Ed. pieces, community convenings, etc.). She reminded ECAB members that our goal is to distill what we have been discussing in a public discourse where everyone can have a meaningful contribution based on what the research shows. She indicated that for our next meeting, we would plan to have a work session to discuss action on the deliverables.

Wrap Up & Next Meeting: Monday, December 14, 2015

Recorded by:

Caitlin J. Saladino, M.A.