

The Nevada Consortium on the Teacher Pipeline
Las Vegas, Nevada
March 18, 2015

Dear State Assemblyman/Senator,

We represent a broad and diverse group of Nevada stakeholders who began meeting in the fall of 2014 to discuss possible solutions to the social and economic implications of teacher shortages in Nevada.

The severity of the teacher shortage, particularly in Southern Nevada, is well known. The Clark County School District began the 2014-2015 school year with over 700 unfilled professional teaching vacancies, and currently still has over 600 vacancies. While all students are impacted in one way or another, the vast majority of classroom vacancies are in schools serving children living in poverty and disproportionately impact children in homes where English is not a primary language.

The Nevada Consortium on the Teacher Pipeline includes individuals representing various organizations, viewpoints, and perspectives from the broadest possible range of constituencies. The group was founded on the belief that the teacher shortage is a complex and community-wide problem and that effective solutions must be similarly sophisticated. As of February 2015, the Consortium has convened four times and, in this short period, close to 100 individuals have participated.

The goal of the Consortium is to identify key policies and interventions to elevate the teacher pipeline crisis. In its February meeting, the Consortium was able to reach majority agreement on six legislative items that, we believe, are likely to help ease the teacher shortage in Nevada. Each of these legislative items is noted below.

- 1) The Consortium supports the Great Teaching and Leading Fund (BDR 1183) as it includes competitive grants to teacher provider programs. We believe this fund will be one building block to help attract, prepare, and retain high quality educators for Nevada's schools.
- 2) The Consortium supports College and Career Readiness grants, particularly to the extent that the grants will provide aid for high schools in offering innovative programs targeted to improve the graduation rate and readiness upon exit. The funds of this grant could be used to help support Clark County School District to attract bright and talented students and provide them with advanced and cutting edge training to re-enter the Clark County School District as effective and vibrant educators ready to affect the next generation of students.
- 3) The Consortium supports the Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) program. We believe that this bill will provide both additional support for teachers as they work to grow professionally and additional opportunities to assume leadership within their schools. Both of these have the potential to help retain the most talented individuals in the profession.
- 4) The Consortium supports Ability to Hire Non-Residents in High Need Areas (AB 27). There are a number of licensed educators in neighboring countries and non US citizens currently living in Nevada who are interested in teaching in the Clark County School District. To the extent AB 27 makes it easier for non-resident individuals to become licensed, the bill increase the availability of qualified teachers.
- 5) The Consortium supports Modernizing the Nevada Plan to include more resources and appropriate weights. This new plan would produce equity statewide and help improve the student-teacher ratio. While the Plan does not directly provide support for new teachers, increasing resources available for students and teachers in the State's highest needs schools will improve retention of qualified teachers in schools.
- 6) The Consortium supports Temporary Teacher License (AB 55). This bill allows teachers who were licensed in other states to teach for 6 months in Nevada, until they meet all of our state's requirements.

The above educational items are representative of what a majority of the Consortium members support; however there were additional education items of importance to mention. While the following legislative items are not directly connected to the teacher pipeline, the Consortium members believe they are important for Nevada's children. These bills include: Social Worker Grants, Creation of Victory Schools, Expansion of Zoom Schools Program, Expansion of Full Day Kindergarten and the amended SB 128 on the Millennium Scholarship.

The Consortium believes that by supporting the above-mentioned educational items, we as a community can build a robust teacher pipeline delivering quality education to our children in the State of Nevada. We hope that you will take our endorsement of the above items into consideration for the upcoming legislative meeting and that we continue to have an open pathway of communication going forward.

Sincerely,

The Nevada Consortium on the Teacher Pipeline Committee

Contacts

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These organizations are members of the Nevada Consortium on the Teacher Pipeline and support the policies and practices mentioned in this letter, as part of the collective voice of this Consortium.

Andre Agassi Foundation for Education
Boys & Girls Club of Southern Nevada
Clark County School District
Clark County Association of School Administrators
Clark County Black Caucus
Clark County Education Association
Clark County Education District Association
Clark County Public Education Foundation
College of Southern Nevada
Communities in Schools of Nevada
Grand Canyon University
Great Basin College
HOPE (Honoring our Public Education)
Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance
Latin Chamber of Commerce, Education Committee
Latino Leadership Council
Lincy Institute, University of Nevada Las Vegas
National University
Nevada Coalition to Address Personnel Shortages in Special Education and Related Services
Nevada Partners
Nevada PTA
Nevada State College
Nevada State Education Association
Nevada Succeeds
Nevada System of Higher Education
Nevadans for the Common Good
Political Advancement of Latinos
Proact Search
The SUPES Academy
Sierra Nevada College
TNTP (The New Teacher Project)
Teach for America
Touro University Nevada
United Way of Southern Nevada
University of Nevada Las Vegas College of Education
University of Nevada Reno
Western Governors University
Wynn Resorts