STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

COUNCIL TO ESTABLISH ACADEMIC STANDARDS FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS
MINUTES FOR MAY 4, 2010 MEETING

MEMBERS PRESENT
Chair Senator Barbara Cegavske (Las Vegas)
Sharon Beatty (Las Vegas)
Amy Carvalho (Las Vegas)
Ben Sayeski (Las Vegas)
Evelyn Allred (Carson City)
Assemblyman David Bobzien (Carson City)
Steve Laden (Carson City)
Kellie Crosby-Sturtz (Carson City)

MEMBERS ABSENT
None

STAFF IN ATTENDANCE
Dr. Keith Rheault, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Lori Johnson, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
Linda Nance, Secretary to the Council
Cindy Sharp, Assistant Director, Curriculum and Standards, Department of Education
Dave Brancamp, Math Consultant, Department of Education

AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE
Jan Biggerstaff, Member, State Board of Education
Bill Hanlon, Director of Southern Nevada Regional Professional Development Program
Craig Stevens, Nevada State Education Association
Chris Wallace, President, State Board of Education
Ray Bacon, Member of Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF), Nevada Manufacturers Association

1. Call to Order; Roll Call, Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting of the Academic Standards Council was called to order at 9:02 a.m. Chair Senator Barbara Cegavske asked that attendance be indicated as above and a quorum was present.

Chair Cegavske conducted the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Agenda Item No. 2 – Review of Supporting Documents for the Common Core Standards (CCS) Review.

Dr. Keith Rheault explained the informational packet sent to the members included a list of national experts who were part of the Math and English writing teams, as requested at the last Academic Standards Council meeting, and the K-12 Common Core Standards (CCS) Draft as reviewed by Fordham Institute. The draft recommendations from the Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) Sub Committee on Standards and Assessment recommended the State Board and Academic Standards Council adopt the CCS. Dr. Rheault directed the Council to review the Common Core Executive Summary (the 15-page document in the packet is available electronically for states to review).

Dave Brancamp, Math Consultant for the State of Nevada, Department of Education, reported on the review of the math standards, noting STEM is the classification in the document for advanced courses such as trig and pre calculus, which Nevada does not have in current standards.

Ms. Sharp reported that teachers overwhelmingly felt that any issues with the new standards could be addressed through a complete and well-organized professional development plan. With the Race to the Top (RTTT) application process, there will be a statewide professional development plan and we will be working with Regional Professional Development Programs (RPDPs). They are the state conduits for getting the information out to the teachers and administrators.

The Department signed on to Smarter Balance Consortium, along with 34 other states. There are four DOE staff assigned to work groups for development of Smarter Balance Consortium application; Ms. Sharp for Assessment Design Team, Carol Crothers for High School Team, Darrin Hardman for Professional Development Team, and Annie Davidson for psychometric validity part of the assessment.

Dr. Rheault asked Mr. Brancamp to comment on the earlier introduction of standards for Grade 3 math.

Mr. Brancamp reported that after talking to the writers, the earlier introduction of grade 3 skill sets will start to move the students from just numbers and operations, further into the application of math theories.

Member Steve Laden asked for an explanation on the why the CCS standards start application in earlier grades than they do in the current Nevada Standards.

Mr. Brancamp replied that there are 11 of the 50 standards that start in earlier grades compared to current Nevada standards, because Nevada uses a bandwidth of grades 3-5. CCS does not use bandwidths so you see them start in grade 3.

Member Laden asked him to address the most dramatic mismatch in high school Math. Mr. Brancamp commented that when DOE wrote our standards for 9-12 grades, we tried

to write as broad as possible because course levels are not designated. CCS is very specific at each grade level and there are certain skills expected to be covered and mastered, such as division of a polynomial.

Member Laden asked if we are looking at a significant increase in the bar being set by the CCS, especially in Math, versus what we have now.

Mr. Brancamp replied that most likely these CCS would increase the rigor.

Member Sharon Beatty that Math is a more complicated area of education in our state because we have so many curriculum differences in each district high school. Additionally, it may be so fundamentally different that it will cause problems for teachers and educators.

Mr. Brancamp added that states would make the decision on how they will present the information. There is also work that needs to be done in the early grades, such as middle school, to make sure students are prepared coming into the high school.

Dr. Rheault noted that 3 years ago the statutes were changed requiring high school students to take specific courses; i.e., 4 English, 4 Math, 3 Science, 3 Social Studies. The statutes only state the requirement, not the specific coursework. BRTF members would like the state to look at end-of-course exams to measure student's proficiency.

3. Agenda Item No. 4 – Possible Adoption of Common Core Standards
Member Evelyn Allred suggested we adopt the CCS. We need to have a timeline; i.e., when the CCS will be introduced and counted as an AYP issue and interim procedures.

Dr. Rheault responded there is no exact timeline. If Academic Standards Council (ASC) and the State Board adopt the CCS prior to August, the next step will be, over the next year, to work with districts to help them align the CCS with their curricula. The second year is professional development year and textbook purchasing year for districts. Depending on how fast development of the assessment programs would be factored into the timeline.

Ms. Sharp noted the CCS go live in 2013- 2014 school year, which allows much more time to do field-testing and change curriculum documents.

Dr. Rheault suggested staggering implementation of Math and then English so they come at different times allowing school districts the opportunity to purchase textbooks separately.

Member Allred mentioned teachers are uncertain how they will be assessed since student achievement is linked to teacher evaluations. It is important for teachers to know what their evaluations will be based on.

Dr. Rheault reported that No Child Left behind (NCLB) is in the review process, with adoption expected in 2011. How AYP and teacher effectiveness is calculated will work with the new standards implementation timeline as well.

Member Laden asked if teachers are required to use training provided by RPDPs for rollout implementation.

Dr. Rheault replied that currently it is voluntary for teachers to participate in RPDPs. The State has not provided separate funding for districts to implement changes to standards. Districts were in a continued process of addressing new standards in Math and then Science and English. It would be beneficial if we get RTTT funding; half could be reserved by the state to provide state support to implement requirements of reform efforts. Budgets are currently being developed. A significant amount of money is required to pay for additional RPDP staff, the primary source for providing information, to address standards and curriculum issues.

Ms. Sharp reported there is the consensual desire across the state to see online changes to include professional development pieces such as Electronic Media Access to Leverage Learning (E-Mall), an online shopping professional development tool for teachers, administrators, and parents.

Bill Hanlon, Director, Southern Nevada Regional Professional Development Program, noted that what drives instruction is testing. The HSPE for juniors/seniors and the new sophomore tests are dramatically different. The standards and tests mesh very well in grades K-6 and 7, but differ for specialty courses. Consequently, schools and teachers focus on HSPE to ensure students graduate and schools makes AYP, instead of focusing on the class or standards. End-of-semester, end-of-year testing coincides, which is better for students and teachers.

Dr. Rheault noted an outside vendor, commissioned by the Legislature, reviewed samples of assignments given to students in class and compared them against the level of standards being taught. The majority of assignments were below the standard they should have been teaching at that level. This can be addressed through CCS. Additionally, federal grant programs could provide for software that will collect each grade assignments against the standard being used. This could be accessible to teachers for class activities.

Ms. Sharp added another benefit is textbooks will align to CCS. In the past, assignments did not align to the standard or depth of knowledge. Since the CCS effort is national, textbook publishers will now look at complexity, as well as alignment to a set of standards, rather than having to look at alignment to different types of standards.

Dr. Rheault recommended the Council consider adopting the total package today. CCS for ELA is broken out into K-5 and 6-12, with a section on 6-12 literacy, history, social studies and science. The 6-12 standards will have a separate section of the Nevada

Administrative Code when the State Board adopts them. Math CCS are a little different, and are broken out by K, grades 1-8, and high school by function areas.

Chair Cegavske suggested that the CCS be adopted with "draft as written." I think where "college and career" is indicated, it should say "or" because there are jobs that do not require university level education. Consideration should be given to those students that want to attend community colleges, trade schools, or military. I am concerned that we do not know what the final products looks like and we are adopting them "as written".

Assemblyman David Bobzien was concerned about adopting the standards marked "draft" and the additional implementation costs.

Member Allred asked how these costs will be absorbed if we are not awarded RTTT money. Additionally, if there is less multiple choice and more writing tests, this will affect our special education students. With fewer standards, we will have better mastery; we will have quality versus quantity, and mastery versus coverage.

Ray Bacon, Member of BRTF, representing Nevada Manufacturers Association, noted our database system has no automatic interchange between k-12 and higher education. NDOE prepares a disc for UNR containing yearly graduate information and UNR's system compares that with their database. The only names counted are those of June high school graduates that transfer to higher education in September. We can increase the college entrance rate if we can get that fixed.

Mr. Hanlon encouraged the Council to adopt CCS today noting they are well written and aligned for K-12. Additionally, we will have the benefit of looking at testing not only from classroom to classroom, but also district to district, and state to state. The ability to share across state lines is positive in terms of professional development and resources. Since there will be fewer standards at the elementary level, teachers will have time for mastery. He continued noting that the Professional Standards Commission has completed or is in process, of adopting teacher preparation degrees in K-8 curriculum. With the addition of minors in Math, Science, Social Studies and English, it means teachers will have to take a class of Introductory Calculus. Teaching Middle School Math requires a strong background to understand the concept. The result is teachers will not only be highly qualified, but highly effective.

Member Beatty expressed concern about the availability of Math teachers for middle school in Nevada.

Mr. Hanlon agreed that we do have shortage of secondary Math teachers due in part to SB 555, which allows school districts to hire teachers in areas of critical need, leaving shortages in many schools. Urban, rural, and frontier school districts are significantly different needs.

Member Amy Carvalho inquired about degree requirements for Nevada teachers.

Mr. Hanlon stated Nevada has a high percentage of teachers with a Master's degree, but not in areas of critical need. It is difficult to recruit those with master's degrees in Math, Science, or Special Education.

Dr. Rheault mentioned that we do collect that information every year and about 40% of Nevada teachers have Master's degrees, although a Master's degree is not required. Information regarding Teacher Preparation can be provided at a later meeting.

Member Laden discussed Dropout rates. Washoe County School District started on the Gateway program working with the San Jose School District. The data shows a reduced dropout rate with the implementation of higher standards. The State emphasizes career readiness and understates college readiness, producing a culture with a population of fewer college degrees. We need more students enrolling in post secondary education and this might be our opportunity to raise the bar and challenge students.

Member Allred expressed concern regarding funding if we are not a RTTT recipient.

Chair Cegavske echoed that concern noting our critical shortfall.

Assemblyman Bobzien mentioned these beneficial structural changes to Nevada are long-term with benefits for many years to come.

Craig Stevens of the Nevada State Education Association noted that adequate funding for technology is crucial with the CCS.

Member Sayeski asked about the current number of available professional development days.

Mr. Stevens replied that it varies by contract for each local. There are a number of required days, and locals can bargain for anything after that.

Chair Cegavske agreed the work and time spent on this has brought people together to improve education in the State of Nevada.

Member Beatty noted Nevada would be more successful with the adoption of CCS. Instead of focusing on students passing tests, our students will become masters of their standards, which will encourage student achievement and higher levels of thinking. This will encourage math and science students to think about teaching as a profession. CCS will affect the lives and time of every teacher, administrator and everyone in the State, and will require personnel time, which is money. Even though there is a high correlation among the standards, this shift will require resources.

Member Kellie Crosby-Sturtz mentioned concerns about funding if we do not get RTTT money, we will need resources to implement a new learning curve for CCS.

Chair Cegavske noted our adoption motion should state that the CCS are adopted "as drafted" or "as written."

Chair Cegavske encouraged changing college "and" career, to college "or" career.
Dr. Rheault stated the task force and several State Board members want us to look separately at career readiness standards. We will review this issue separately after RTTT. Half of the states that adopted college and career readiness have them as one in the same and the other half have separate career readiness standards. A task force will be formed to review this issue and he will keep the Council informed. He reminded the Council that we are adopting standards, not NAC language.

Chair Cegavske remarked that our students do not have to go to college, but they do need the skills to work in the various industries in Nevada.

Member Sayeski moved to adopt the CCS as written in draft form. Assemblyman Bobzien seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Member Allred pointed out that these standards are for all students with no political impetus.

Dr. Rheault reported that a counter report last week noted the group did think they had somewhat ignored the career readiness portion. A separate review was then performed and was delivered to Secretary Duncan. Both sides have input that will be reviewed separately when we put forward our career readiness standards.

Member Beatty asked if we needed to amend the original motion because we have no funding guarantees.

Chair Cegavske echoed the funding concern, noting with no guarantee we should implement no cost items first.

Dr. Rheault stated with RTTT success, we would have the funding to follow the BRTF timeline. If we do not receive RTTT funding, school districts can come back to the Council and State Board for a review of the BRTF Plan. They can revisit the RTTT application timeline and agree on another timeline that would work for all districts, which may cause a delay. Additionally, if we do not get RTTT funding, then we can choose implementation or a delay. The key factor could be funding that is available particularly for professional development and buying textbooks.

Ms. Sharp mentioned the need to stay focused on the consortium and the benefit in everything we are planning. If we do not get RTTT money, we could stagger the ELA and Math separately. Even without the money, we are gaining information, materials and ideas. We need to make sure there is a process in place to get the standards rolled out. We have many people joining us in this effort and the collaboration will be very beneficial.

Member Beatty is concerned about an unfunded mandate if RTTT monies are not received. We might want to move to revisit the adoption of the CCS if that happens

Dr. Rheault suggested we adopt the CCS today. If we are not successful in RTTT, the first agenda item after that could be on the Academic Standards Council to review the CCS implementation.

Assemblyman Bobzien suggested leaving money issues to the legislature and there should be no need to reconstruct the motion.

Member Sayeski mentioned that we have the flexibility to implement this and it is fiscally sound and responsible. What we want to accomplish is clear in the documents we have been shown today.

Chair Cegavske stated that the CCS draft as written is approved. She thanked all members and Dr. Rheault and his staff, and thanked Mr. Hanlon for his work with the RPDPs.

Mr. Bacon mentioned Jane Nichols informed him that starting next spring, Math and Science Juniors with a GPA of 3.0 or higher will have an opportunity to take one extra semester of education courses. With a passing grade, they will receive a Math and Science teaching certificate at the high school level.

Member Carvalho asked if that was through the whole state or specific districts.

Mr. Bacon replied it was university system Math and Science Juniors.

Chris Wallace, President of the State Board of Education, stated that this entire process of coming together to reform education has been outstanding and recommends this Council adopt CCS. He stated that he is also encouraging the State Board members to adopt the CCS as a concentrated effort to keep this momentum for improvement of education in Nevada.

4. <u>Agenda Item No. 5 – Identify Date and Agenda Topics for Next Council Meeting</u>
Chair Cegavske asked for the next meeting date.

Dr. Rheault recommended meeting after September 1 when Race to the Top has been awarded.

Chair Cegavske suggested September 21 or the 28th, adding that most members prefer September 21.

Dr. Rheault agreed our next meeting will be September 21 at 9:00 am, and we will post this date on the Council website. In addition, our first workshop, the first requirement for getting the CCS into regulation, has been scheduled for the May 14 State Board meeting.

A summary of this workshop and public comments will be shared with the Council. We will bring these back for adoption in regulation at the June 18 State Board meeting.

5. Comments from Public

None

6. Adjournment of Meeting – Meeting was adjourned at 11:06 am