



Nevada State Improvement Plan

December, 2006

NEVADA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
NEVADA STATE BOARD FOR CAREER & TECHNICAL
EDUCATION

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The State Board of Education would like to thank the Nevada Department of Education staff, members of the work group, and all of the key partners that participated in the development and writing of the 2006 State Improvement Plan.

The State of Nevada Department of Education is an equal opportunity/affirmative action agency and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, political affiliation, or disabilities.

Nevada State Board of Education Vision, Mission, and Goals

VISION

Quality education for all

MISSION

The Nevada State Board of Education/Nevada State Board for Career & Technical Education is dedicated to fostering excellent educational opportunities provided to all learners by sustaining a coherent, aligned system of instruction and support in partnership with all educational communities.

PHILOSOPHY/VALUES

The State Board serves as an advocate for all learners, sets the policy that allows equal access to educational services, and provides a vision for a premiere educational system in collaboration with all communities to foster high levels of success.

STATE BOARD GOALS

GOAL 1

All learners will have the opportunity to achieve high levels of academic proficiency and career preparedness; achievement gaps between population groups will be closed.

GOAL 2

Every learner will receive quality instruction and learning experiences.

GOAL 3

Educational programs, services and activities will continually evolve and improve, measured by reliable and valid criteria.

GOAL 4

Educational communities will be supported and developed.

GOAL 5

All learning environments will be healthy, safe and secure.

GOAL 6

Funding will be sought to adequately support educational achievement for all learners.

SUMMARY OF NEVADA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION NEVADA STATE BOARD FOR CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

December 2005 through November 2006

According to Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 385.075: "The State Board shall establish policies to govern the administration of all functions of the State relating to supervision, management and control of public schools not conferred by law on some other agency."

To carry out its statutory role, the State Board conducted six meetings in the period of this report including a joint meeting with the Board of Regents.

The following is the highlights of actions or accomplishments resulting from their meetings:

Adoption or Revisions of Regulations

- Establishing upper age limit for high school pupils for apportionment purposes.
- Revised language for Special Education regulations to conform to federal law.
- Change term "Occupational Education" to "Career and Technical Education."
- Notice for Charter School revocation.
- Credit transfer from home schooled students at junior high school level.
- Issuance of Certificate of educational equivalency.
- Occupational skill standards.
- Academic standards for courses in math grades K-12.
- Calculating basic support.
- Provision and maintenance of insurance coverage for Charter Schools.

Non-Regulatory Actions / Adoptions

- Created Task Forces on:
 - Apple Initiative
 - Curriculum Alignment
 - Governance
 - Indian Education (see bullet at the end of this section)
- Adopted State Improvement Plan, 2005
- Approval of Summer Food Service Program Management and Administrative Plan.
- Approval of State Application for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP).
- Approval of State Textbook Adoption List.
- Award of State Special Education and Gifted and Talented Units.
- Adopted Recommendations for the P-16 Council to:
 1. Strengthen and Restructure the Council.
 2. Use consistent and relevant data to drive improvement and evaluate progress.
 3. Support study of the governance structure of P-12 education.
- Approval of private school licenses or re-licenses for 12 schools.

Non-Regulatory Actions / Adoptions (Continued)

- Approval of Dual Credit Courses for Douglas County, Elko County and Nevada State High School.
- Rejected applications for two Charter Schools.
- Approved two Charter School Subsection 6 applications.
- Revoked sponsorship of one Charter School.
- Approved bill draft requests for 2007 Legislative Session relating to private schools, alternative education programs, due dates for district fiscal reports and unclassified Nevada Department of Education salaries.
- Approved Distributive School Account funds request for 2007 Legislative Session including;
 - Revenue to set student / teacher ratios at 2002 level,
 - A 2% rolls up,
 - A 3% cost of living salary increase,
 - A 15% group health insurance increase,
 - A utility increase at 2%,
 - And other increases at 3%.
- Approved Nevada Department of Education budget including enhancements.
- Supported iNVEST 2007.
- Set Achievement Level Cut Scores for Criterion Reference Tests added to the assessment program.
- Adopted recommendations from the Curriculum Alignment Task Force.
- Approved class size variances.
- Adopted Nevada School Bus Out-of-Service Manual.
- Adopted Nevada School Bus Standards.
- Revoked Teaching License of a teacher convicted of crimes.
- Approved the formation of a task force to accomplish the proposed strategic plan for Indian Education.
- Approved appointments to various advisory councils.

Received Reports Regarding the Following Issues:

- 2005 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) results
- Gibbons-Bishop Bill regarding sale of federal land for education funding.
- Youth Risk Behavior Survey results.
- Davidson Institute regarding establishment of University School for Profoundly Gifted and Talented Pupils.
- Summary of District Improvement Plans.
- Reports from Regional Professional Development Programs.
- Report on selection of School Support Team Leaders.
- Nevada Indian Commission report regarding reducing the dropout rate of Native American students.
- Requirements of NCLB school designations for Title 1 and Non-Title 1 schools.
- Importance of school nurses.
- Importance of gifted and talented programs.

Received Reports Regarding the Following Issues (Continued):

- ComputerCorps, “Every Home a Classroom” Program.
- iNVEST 2007
- GROW Network
- P-16 Council
- Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Programs.
- Apple Initiative
- Opt Out / Opt In Military access to public school students.
- Strategic Plan for Indian Education.
- Fraudulent or misleading degrees.
- Corrective actions for Charter Schools under State sponsorship.
- Teachers-Teachers.com Report on teacher recruitment.
- Test Security Report, 2005-2006.
- Open Meeting Law Requirements.
- ACR10 Adequacy Study.
- Commission on Educational Excellence Actions.
- Legislative Committee on Education Proposed Actions for 2007 Legislature.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

State legislation requires that the State Board of Education develop a state improvement plan. The Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 385.34691 (Appendix A) establishes the requirements for this plan. The State Board must submit the revised plan to the Governor, Legislative Committee on Education, Legislative Counsel Bureau, Board of Regents of the State of Nevada System of Higher Education, the Council on Academic Standards, the board of trustees of each school district, and the governing body of each charter school, on or before December 15 of each year.

Participants in the development of the 2006 state improvement plan (as required by NRS) were as follows:

- State Board of Education
 - Barbara Myers, Member, Nevada State Board of Education
- Employees of the Nevada Department of Education
 - Keith Rheault, Superintendent of Public Instruction
 - Gloria Dopf, Deputy Superintendent
 - Paul LaMarca, Assistant Deputy Superintendent
 - Frankie McCabe, Director, Office of Special Education, Elementary and Secondary Education, and School Improvement Programs
 - Phyllis Dryden, Director, Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education
- At least one employee of a school district in a county whose population is 100,000 or more, appointed by Nevada Association of School Boards
 - Karlene McCormick-Lee, Superintendent, Superintendent's Schools, Clark County School District
- At least one employee of a school district in a county whose population is less than 100,000, appointed by Nevada Association of School Boards
 - Kendyl Depoali, Superintendent, Public Policy, Special Projects and Legislation, Washoe County School District
- At least one representative of the statewide Council for the Coordination of the Regional Training Programs (NRS 391.516) appointed by the Council
 - Hugh Rossolo, Director, Elko Regional Professional Development Program, Great Basin College

Additional participants in the development of the state improvement plan were as follows:

- Representatives of higher education
 - Linda Heiss, Vice Chancellor for Academic & Student Affairs, University and Community College System
 - William Sparkman, Dean, College of Education, University of Nevada, Reno
- Other persons whom the State Board determines appropriate:
 - Sharon Blackmon, Coordinator, Equity and Diversity Programs, Clark County School District
 - Craig Butz, Administrator, Odyssey Charter School
 - Roy Casey, Director, Western Nevada Regional Training Program
 - Susan Denning, Northwest Regional Professional Development Program Coordinator, Washoe County School District
 - Nancy Hollinger, Trustee, Washoe County School Board
 - Harry York, CEO, Reno-Sparks Chamber of Commerce
- Nevada Department of Education staff support: Kathy St. Clair, Leslie James, Syna Erb, and Charlotte Curtis

The Student Achievement Gap Elimination (SAGE) improvement process:

The Nevada Department of Education developed the SAGE school improvement process that has been utilized in working with schools identified as In Need of Improvement. The Nevada Department of Education State Improvement Plan Steering Committee followed the SAGE school improvement revision process (using the State Board of Education vision, mission, and goals for guidance, on page 3) to update the 2006 State Improvement Plan (STIP). Each year the revision process is followed to ensure a continuous improvement cycle.

The state improvement plan includes the following components outlined in NRS:

- **Data Analysis:** A review and analysis of the state mandated accountability data and problems or factors common among school districts or charter schools based upon the accountability data.
- **Strategies:** Strategies that strengthen the core academic subjects that are based on scientifically-based research, improve academic instruction, and provide information to students, teachers, administrators, counselors, and parents in the state.

Needs Assessment Summary:

Successes Found: Progress has been made in developing, sustaining, and/or enhancing the components of a comprehensive educational system that improves classroom instruction and student achievement. The state organizational system and culture support improvement planning that guides professional development and program evaluation. Extensive resources and time have been utilized to enhance the collection and use of consistent and relevant data at all levels to drive the improvement process. Research-based strategies to improve instruction in core academic subjects and the academic performance of all students have been implemented in schools across the state. A statewide initiative to focus on secondary education has stimulated the implementation of a variety of high school reform strategies. Planning and resource support continues for successful practices and innovative programs that focus on outcome indicators (such as Career and Technical Education programs where students have a higher graduation rate than the state average and are considerably less likely to dropout of school). Increasing numbers of students are taking advantage of Tech Prep courses in Career and Technical Education (CTE), which provide a seamless transition to college by allowing students to earn college credit for courses taken in high school. Through various state initiatives, the state has made information about Nevada's schools and their performance and safety much more readily available to parents and the public.

Areas of Concern: Disparities between ethnic groups in test performance and graduation rates are significant and longstanding. Similar disparities are seen with trends in the performance of special populations (low socioeconomic status, students with disabilities, and Limited English Proficient students). With the identification of more and more schools In Need of Improvement, as well as the emergence of district and state sponsored charter schools, the lack of capacity and resources to assist these schools becomes a critical issue. The state must ensure that students have access to challenging and relevant standards-based general education curriculum, materials, and technology. It is imperative that the leadership and support mechanisms (state, regions, districts, schools, parents, and the community) focus on implementation and program evaluation in order to maximize use of limited human and fiscal resources. Additional resources are needed for training in proper interpretation and use of data. The need for increased parental involvement in education remains an ongoing focus across the state.

Priority Needs:

From the comprehensive data analysis, the STIP Steering Committee concluded that across grades and with respect to English Language Arts (ELA) and math, there is a consistent pattern of achievement gaps. A coordinated effort by all education partners is necessary to address the following priority needs: (a) raise student achievement in core content areas and decrease the achievement gap between overall student performance and the ethnic groups and special populations, and (b) establish, support, and sustain student performance in a cohesive system that aligns curriculum, instruction, assessment, and professional development, involving state, regions, districts, and schools in improving teaching and student learning.

The following goals, consistent with the State Board goals on page iii, were identified to fulfill the requirements of NRS:

- To improve student performance through focused and unwavering collaboration with all key partners for a cohesive and aligned implementation of statewide improvement processes that drive all levels (school, district, and state) and increase student learning, effective teaching, and meaningful parental and community involvement.
- To improve instruction and learning through continued use of consistent and relevant data at all levels (student, classroom, school, district, and state) to support the improvement planning process, to evaluate the effectiveness of planned programs, and to drive instructional decisions focused on increased student achievement.
- To improve the performance of all students through the implementation of proven practices that enhance instruction in core academic subjects (English/Language Arts, mathematics, science, and social studies) and reduce achievement gaps.
- To implement effective statewide professional development activities and educator pre-service preparation focused on data-driven needs and proven practices that will improve the learning of students as identified in school, district, and state improvement plans.
- To improve student achievement in middle schools and high schools through the implementation of a statewide initiative that focuses on secondary education, including strategies to improve academic achievement, increase graduation rates, decrease dropout rates, improve distribution of information to the public, and increase post-secondary program enrollment and success rates.

The 2006 STIP action plan has been revised to accomplish these updated goals. The plan extends over several years to implement and to demonstrate improvement in the targeted areas. The goals and strategies from the previous year have been evaluated and reviewed, as this year's goals and strategies will be prioritized, evaluated, and reviewed on a continuous improvement schedule.

INTRODUCTION

The culture behind Nevada's improvement planning embraces **high expectations for each student** and is built upon the foundation of the following beliefs:

- The work of schools is student learning.
- All children can benefit from challenging and relevant curriculum.
- Every teacher can be an expert when provided collaborative and sustained professional development focused on improving instruction.
- Content should be aligned to standards, be challenging, and be relevant.
- Key indicators of success are achievement/proficiency scores, graduation rates, dropout rates, percent of highly qualified teachers, and adequacy and equity of funding for all public schools.
- Improvement must be continuous.
- Parental support and involvement are critical to improved student performance.
- Effective use of data is critical to continuous improvement of teaching and learning.

Comprehensive improvement plans take several years to implement and to demonstrate improvement in the targeted areas. An annual revision provides the opportunity to identify effective practices and/or actions that should be continued and ineffective practices and/or actions that should be revised or eliminated.

Comprehensive Needs Assessment Data Summary

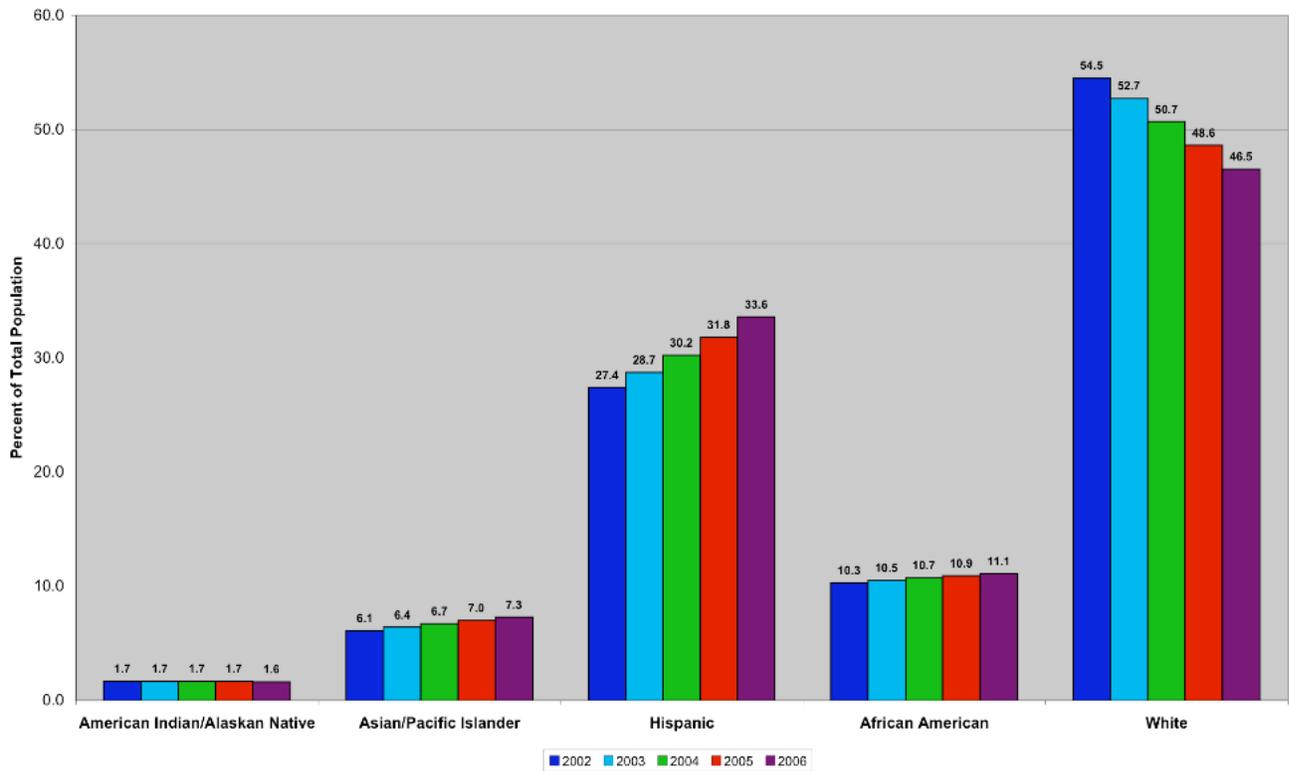
The following narrative of the comprehensive needs assessment describes the current status of the state with the following organizing areas: state characteristics, school environment, parent/community involvement, curriculum and instruction, professional development, student outcome indicators. The data summary is followed by the prioritized goals and the revised action plan.

State Educational Community Characteristics

Students in Nevada

According to the 2000 Census, there were 1,998,257 people living in Nevada. For 2010 the projection is 2,690,531, a 35% increase from the 2000 figure. The increase in Nevada's general population is reflected in the student population growth. During the 2005-2006 school year, 412,947 students were enrolled in Nevada public schools. This number reflects a 26.9% increase from the school year during the census (1999-2000). As shown in Figure 1, Nevada's Asian, Hispanic, and African American student populations have increased in the last five years (2002 to 2006). The Hispanic and Asian student populations grew the most, with the Hispanic population increasing by 58% (from 87,696 to 138,800) and the Asian population increasing by 56% (from 19,282 to 30,007). In contrast, the White student population has decreased by 0.6% (193,215 to 191,986) in the last five years. The 2005-2006 school year was the first year with the minority student population making up the majority.

Figure 1 – Percent of Nevada Students by Ethnic Groups (2002-2006)



There has been a corresponding increase in the number of students who do not speak English as their first language. Of the 91 different languages spoken, Spanish is by far the most common, with 94% of Limited English Proficient (LEP) learners listing Spanish as the language spoken at home on the Home Language Survey.

The growth in Nevada’s student population has also resulted in an increase in the number of students living in poverty. From the 2003-2004 school year to the 2005-2006 school year, the percent of students living in poverty, as determined by eligibility for free and/or reduced price lunch (FRL), increased by 30% (from 132,129 to 171,118). The number of students living in poverty (171,118) in the 2005-2006 school year represents 42% of the total public school student population for that year.

Nevada’s Licensed Personnel and Paraprofessionals

There are 21,686 full time equivalent teaching positions, according to the February 2006 Research Bulletin published by the Nevada Department of Education. The National Education Association’s most recent Rankings and Estimates (2004) lists the national average teacher salary at \$47,750 and Nevada’s average teacher salary at \$43,394.

Licensed personnel (25,599 full time equivalent positions) do not reflect the diversity of the student population, with the vast majority of Nevada licensed personnel (84%) being White. Hispanics and African Americans represent approximately 5% of the state’s licensed

personnel, even though these groups constitute 34% and 11% of the student population respectively. Approximately 3% of Nevada's licensed personnel are Asian and only 1% are American Indian.

The Office of Licensed Personnel reported May 1, 2006 that 80.38% of core classes were being taught by teachers who met the "highly qualified" criteria established by the state in response to No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (an increase from 68.1% of core classes as of the October 1, 2005 district "Contracted Educators Report"). All Nevada districts have a plan for their core academic teachers to meet the NCLB "highly qualified" requirements by the US Department of Education 2007 timeline or flexibility timelines established for rural districts and new special education teachers.

In April 2006 the percentage of core academic classes taught by teachers meeting the NCLB "highly qualified" requirements in high-poverty elementary schools was 83% (up from 69% the previous year) and in low-poverty elementary schools the percentage was 87% (up from 79% the previous year). The percentage of core academic classes taught by teachers meeting the NCLB "highly qualified" requirements in high-poverty secondary schools was 63% (up from 53% the previous year) and in low-poverty secondary schools the percentage was 80% (up from 74% the previous year). In the Nevada Equitable Distribution of Teachers Plan submitted to the US Department of Education July 2006 there were 85 "high-need schools" identified. The criteria for this identification is that a school has 20% or more non-"highly qualified" teachers and/or teachers with less than three years of experience at high-poverty schools (62.2% or greater) or high-minority schools (> 50%) that were in need of improvement. Of the 85 "high-need schools", 81 "high-need schools" were identified in Clark County School District and 4 "high-need schools" were identified in Washoe County School District. The Nevada goal is to implement strategies in the Nevada Equitable Distribution of Teachers Plan so poor and minority students have equitable access to effective teachers who are able to teach students to needed levels of achievement.

Paraprofessionals play an important role in student learning. As of January 2006, 91.6% of Title I paraprofessionals met the NCLB "high quality" paraprofessional criteria required. This paraprofessional database is currently being updated. The August 2006 accountability report shows that 68.6% of all paraprofessionals in the state did not meet the NCLB definition of a "high quality" paraprofessional. One reason for the significant difference between this data is that Title I schools are required to have paraprofessionals that meet the "high quality" criteria, while non-Title I schools are not.

Variability of Nevada's Districts & Resources

Nevada's 17 school districts reflect the unique population distribution within the state. Clark County is currently the fifth largest school district in the country, with 293,801 students in the 2005-2006 school year. An adjacent school district, Esmeralda, has 86 enrolled students. The variability can also be seen in the student-teacher ratios, with the larger school districts having a student-teacher ratio of approximately 20:1 and one of the small school district having a student-teacher ratio of 6:1. The 2005-2006 class size student-teacher ratio for the state was 21:1.

In addition, the first statute authorizing charter schools in the state was passed by the Legislature in 1997. The number of charter schools in the state has increased slightly over the last three years. In the 2003-2004, there were 12 district-sponsored charter schools. For the 2005-2006 school year, there were 11 district-sponsored and 4 state-sponsored charter schools in operation.

NRS 387.121 guarantees the per pupil level of financial support. The 2005-2006 average per-pupil expenditure in the State of Nevada was \$6,741, a slight increase from the previous year (\$6,648). Nevada's 2005 per-pupil expenditure is significantly lower than the 2006 national average of \$9,111. For the 2005-2006 school year, 256 schools statewide were eligible for Title I funding and 135 schools actually received funding. That calculates to approximately 53% of eligible schools receiving funding. The reason for the discrepancy is the insufficient level of funding available for Title I allocations.

In preparation for the 2007 Legislative Session, the Nevada Association of School Boards and the Nevada Association of School Superintendents revised the 2005 iNVEST (Investing in Nevada's Education, Students, and Teachers) to form the 2007 iNVEST plan. The plan's premise is that through identification of common needs and goals, Nevada's leaders can develop a statewide vision that will result in increased student achievement.

Learning Environment and Culture

A Safe and Healthy Environment

Nevada strives for a learning environment for students that is safe, motivating, and conducive to academic success (NRS 392.600 and NRS 392.463). Each school district adopted a plan to ensure the public schools within the school are safe and free of controlled substances. This plan includes written rules of student behavior as well as consequences for behavioral violations. All students receive a copy of these guidelines at the start of the school year or upon first entering a new school. State Board members reviewed the safety plans submitted by the school districts to the Nevada Department of Education (NDE).

Each district's board of school trustees deals with parent and/or student concerns/complaints about alleged violations or failure to apply school/district rules and regulations. In addition, each public school in Nevada adopted a policy promoting a safe and respectful learning environment essential for all students to achieve academic success and meet the state's high academic standards. The NDE provides technical assistance and training on matters of school safety and discipline as requested by local school districts. Annually the NDE must submit a report to the Legislature concerning the progress of schools and school districts in complying with NRS 392.4644 on Progressive Discipline Plans. The school districts are currently submitting the Progressive Discipline Plans to the NDE.

In addition to a safe environment, it is critical to create a healthy environment in which students have the opportunity to acquire knowledge and develop the life skills to make appropriate food and activity choices through the practical application of nutrition principles acquired in the classroom and at home. Each district is required to establish a School Wellness Policy committee and must report to the Nevada Department of Education on an

annual basis the progress the district has made on implementing the policy. Currently the NDE website makes available the Statewide School Wellness Policy, resources for implementing the policy, and approved foods and beverages that meet the policy guidelines. By August 1, 2006, every school district but one had developed and implemented a local School Wellness Policy based on the Statewide School Wellness Policy as required by the Child Nutrition Program and the Women, Infants, and Children's Program Reauthorization Act of 2004.

Research has shown that students who regularly eat breakfast perform better academically. During the 2005 Nevada Legislative session, Assembly Concurrent Resolution (ACR) 5 was passed, strongly encouraging school districts to increase the number of students who participate in the federally funded School Breakfast Program by 15% each year. Each district must provide a progress report that indicates the growth in school breakfast participation. This legislation responds to the expectation that schools provide students with basic nutritional needs, especially as the population of students living in poverty increases in the state.

Student Behavior

In the broadest sense, student behavior includes attendance, transiency rates, and retention rates. The attendance rate in 2005-2006 was 93.7% (a slight decrease from 94.5% in 2004-2005). The student population in Nevada is highly mobile, with the transiency rate at 33.5% (a slight decrease from last year's 34%). Student retention rates were highest at grades one (2.8%) and eight (2.4%) and lowest at grades five (0.3%) and four (0.5%), although all retention rates showed a slight increase from last year's rates. Retention here means the repeating of a grade.

Information on the behavior of Nevada's students is primarily tracked through the state accountability system. Student behavior information collected pertains to student discipline and truancy. Detailed information regarding student behavior can be found at the Nevada State Report Card website (on the NDE website at www.doe.nv.gov). The state-level data shows that student violence is a concern, with incidents involving violence by students to other students far exceeding other incident categories. While no schools in Nevada have been designated as "persistently dangerous" based on state criteria established in compliance with NCLB, there have been documented incidents of violence to students and staff in Nevada's schools.

Academic Support and Recognition

Millennium Scholarship. The Guinn Millennium Scholarship Program, funded by tobacco settlement funds, provides funding to allow Nevada's students to continue their education beyond high school. The requirements for students to be eligible are the following: graduate with a Nevada high school diploma, have at least a 3.10 grade point average, and must have been a Nevada resident while attending at least two years in a Nevada high school. In 2007, the grade point average requirement will increase to 3.25. The graduating class of 2010 will have additional course requirements in math and science to qualify for the scholarship. For the fall 2006, there are 25,304 millennium scholars attending institutions of higher education. Of the fall total, 62% of the scholars are white, 13% are Hispanic, 11% are Asian, 4% are Black, 1% are American Indian. Nine percent did not indicate ethnicity.

Teacher Incentives. The State of Nevada has initiated and expanded several incentives to employ and retain teachers. These are as follows:

- Continuation of signing bonuses for new teachers. The 2005 Legislature appropriated \$6.052 million for 2006 and \$6.354 million for 2007 to support \$2000 per new teacher hire.
- The 2005 Legislature appropriated \$16,138,996 for 2006 and \$18,433,608 for 2007 to support the purchase of 1/5 retirement credit for teachers who teach at a school which carries the designation of “need for improvement” or at a school that has at least 65% of the pupils who are at-risk.
- A companion appropriation was an additional \$9,369,907 for 2006 and \$49,763,443 for 2007 to support the purchase of the 1/5 retirement credit for licensed personnel in hard to fill positions such as mathematics teachers, science teachers, special education teachers, English as a Second Language specialists and school psychologists. It is particularly difficult to find enough qualified individuals to fill positions in these specialized areas. In order to offset early retirement, the Legislature passed a law allowing retired staff in hard to fill positions to be rehired upon approval from the Superintendent and continue to receive retirement benefits while actively employed in the state.
- The Legislature appropriated \$5 million per year of the biennium for grants to school districts to adopt a program of performance pay and enhanced compensation for recruitment, retention and mentoring of licensed personnel at at-risk schools.

At this time, there is not sufficient study of the impact of these incentives to make a determination of their success. In addition to the monetary incentives provided, there is a need for heightened support to schools with persistent low performance to help turn them around.

Teacher Qualification & Recognition. A number of Nevada’s teachers have received qualifications and recognition beyond the “highly qualified” criteria. Since 2001, 221 Nevada teachers have achieved National Board Certification. Since 1983, 33 science teachers and 30 math teachers in the state have been honored as recipients of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. Other recognitions include the Nevada Teacher of the Year Awards, Superintendent of the Year Award, Nevada Public Education Foundation’s Education Hall of Fame Educator Award, and the Milken Awards. All of these awards are peer-nominated with panels making final decisions. Each award celebrates excellence in education and dedication to the profession.

School Recognition. Schools also have opportunities to earn designations and awards, such as the Blue Ribbon and the Title I Distinguished Schools recognitions. Through the state accountability system, schools can earn Exemplary Achievement and High Achievement recognition for impressive student achievement on statewide assessments and for exceeding the requirements for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). In addition to the AYP recognition, the NDE recognizes schools that are making significant growth in student achievement (regardless of AYP status) at the annual Mega Conference through the

Highlighting Nevada Schools program. The NDE has also partnered with the International Center for Leadership in Education to pair model high schools with struggling high schools in a mentoring capacity. The accomplished teachers, principals, other educators, and recognized schools in Nevada are a talent pool to help with systemic improvement efforts, such as in partnership with struggling schools or as a resource for technical assistance of proven practices.

Parent and Community Involvement

The State of Nevada has systems in place for parent and community involvement in the educational process, as well as for communication with parents. State law requires that each school district develop a parental involvement policy consistent with the State Board's policy. The Nevada accountability statute requires annual accountability reports to be disseminated to Nevada's parents and requires accountability information to be made available to the community. Among the information included in these accountability reports is information pertaining to parental involvement in schools.

Parent Involvement

During the 2005 Legislative session, statutory requirements for parent involvement in education were expanded. Senate Bill 214, Section 17 requires all public schools to distribute Educational Involvement Accords to the parent(s) of each student. NDE has developed a form for the Educational Involvement Accords that complies with No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 and the Parent Involvement Policy adopted by the State Board of Education.

Nevada's First Parent Involvement Summit: Connecting the Dots - Parent Involvement and Student Achievement was conducted March 27, 2006, in Reno. Many collaborators to this event, including the State Board of Education and NDE, Nevada Parent Teacher Association, Nevada legislators and the Governor's office, contributed to its success. Governor Kenny Guinn welcomed over 165 parents, teachers, superintendents, principals, trustees, legislators, and department of education personnel who represented 16 of the 17 school districts to a day of exploring current research and increasing student achievement by involving parents. During the final "Planning for the Future" session, participants determined that regional or district summits should be conducted and a follow-up parent involvement committee should meet to continue the parent involvement / student achievement dialogue and efforts. In addition, a summary report on the Summit will be completed and distributed Fall 2006.

Parents in Nevada have the opportunity to be involved in parent organizations such as the Nevada Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and Nevada Parents Encouraging Parents (PEP), a group representing the interests of parents of students with disabilities. Parent organizations such as Nevada PTA and PEP are also actively engaged in the legislative process through lobbying activities. The Nevada Open Meeting Law ensures that the public can communicate with their school district's local Board of Trustees and with the state through the State Board of Education's regularly scheduled meetings. In addition, each district must include at least one parent on the School Wellness Policy committee.

The Grow Network has been funded by the Nevada Legislature since 2004 to provide assessment reports and instructional tools for parents, teachers, and instructional leaders based on the results of the Nevada State Criterion Referenced Tests, Norm Referenced Tests, High School Proficiency Examinations, and the Nevada Writing Assessment. In the 2005-2006 school year, the Grow Network provided individual student reports, a website for students and parents, and statewide parent communication and outreach. Use of the website has increased slightly in 2005-2006, from 2,455 hits recorded (2004-2005) to 2,895 hits recorded.

As a requirement of both state and federal statutes, school districts inform parents regarding their rights to specific information about both their children's teachers and schools. Parents are informed when their children attend schools that have been designated as "In Need of Improvement," when their children are eligible to receive supplemental educational services, and when a school is deemed "persistently dangerous" under federal law.

Parents of students who attend Title I schools are notified of their right to send their children to another school if the Title I school is "In Need of Improvement," and of the qualifications of the teachers and paraprofessionals who work with their children. In addition, parents of LEP students who attend Title I schools must be notified of the reasons why their children have been identified as LEP and of their right to refuse to have their children placed in a LEP program.

The Education Collaborative of Washoe County was awarded the *Parent Information Resource Center Grant* for 2006-2007 and will help to implement successful and effective parental policies, programs, and activities that lead to improvements in student academic achievement and strengthen partnership among parents, teacher, principals, administrators, and other school personnel in meeting the educational needs of children.

Community Involvement

The State Board of Education and NDE communicate with parents and the community through the NDE website (www.doe.nv.gov), press releases, and through various sources responsible for disseminating relevant information (primarily assessment results). Parents and community members can learn about schools and districts through the websites sponsored by school districts.

An essential component of a comprehensive statewide educational system is business and industry involvement. The business community is involved with the educational system in various capacities. Business representatives are members of many of the planning and advisory committees, such as the Special Education advisory committee, the Title I Committee of Practitioners, the STARS High School Improvement work group, the State Improvement Plan Steering Committee, and the P-16 Council. Businesses across the state are also in partnerships with schools, providing schools with resource and advisory support.

Career and technical education has a long-standing relationship with the business community. Through a state system of technical skill committees and occupational councils, business and industry representatives for years have been involved in the review and

development of CTE programs. Such input has been vital to ensure CTE programs remain current with industry needs.

There are two levels of business and industry involvement with CTE. One level for business and industry involvement is participation on oversight committees or business partnerships used by school districts (and community colleges) to help determine overall needs for CTE. The oversight committee or partnership may perform such specific functions as review district applications for CTE funding and guide strategic planning. Another level for involvement is participation on program-specific technical skill committees. These committees are comprised of representatives who are experts in a specific career field, such as automotive technology or computer networking. Technical skill committees focus efforts on improving a particular job-specific CTE program area. Their involvement often leads to equipment donations, development of job-shadowing opportunities for students, and approval of curriculum standards.

A section of Assembly Bill 580, passed by the 2005 State Legislature, requires each school district to maintain an active technical advisory committee comprised mostly of business and industry representatives to perform many of the duties described above. This legislation put into statute very specific requirements for business and industry involvement in career and technical education in each school district. The *Information Technology Advisory Group* in Washoe County provides a P-16 advisory structure that involves the business community (primarily the information technology sector), K-12, higher education information officers, and instructional technology curriculum professionals to review and make recommendations regarding technology curriculum and hardware, software, and infrastructure.

Curriculum, Instruction, and Intervention

Curriculum and instruction is guided by Nevada content and achievement standards. Content and achievement standards in English/Language Arts, mathematics, and science were developed by the Council to Establish Academic Standards and adopted during the 1998-1999 school year. Other subject area standards followed suit. All of Nevada's districts and schools are required to adopt and implement grade-level curriculum that will enable students to meet or exceed the state standards in all core areas. The intent is that all standards will be taught to all students and performance relative to the standards will be evaluated through a combination of state and local assessments. The content and achievement standards are available at the NDE website (www.doe.nv.gov).

The Council to Establish Academic Standards is also charged by the legislature (NRS 389.520) to establish timelines and procedures for periodic review and revision of the content and achievement standards. The Council developed a cycle of review to precede the scheduled adoption of new instructional materials. The intent is that any changes in the content and achievement standards would be known and incorporated into district curriculum documents before new materials are considered for adoption. A committee of teachers, parents, university faculty, and administrators participate in the process of revision. The standards for Science, both content and achievement, were the first to be reviewed. The

review of the science standards started in March 2004 and the Council approved the revised standards in January 2005. The State Board of Education adopted the new Science Standards in April 2005. The content and achievement standards in mathematics were approved by the Council in March of 2006 and were adopted by the State Board in August 2006. The English/Language Arts standards as well as health and physical education will be revised in 2006-2007 and revision of the social studies standards will occur in 2007-2008. Districts have one year to align their curriculum to the revised standards upon adoption of by the State Board. The revision process occurs approximately every seven years for each content area.

Resources and guides are provided to assist teachers with the implementation of state standards. For the Social Studies Standards, the NDE and teachers met to create an integrated standards document for elementary and secondary teachers. These documents provide an integrated view of social studies, as well as a user-friendly version of the standards for teachers to use while planning lessons. In Career and Technical Education, state curriculum guides have been developed in agricultural subjects, information technology, health occupations, hospitality and tourism, and marketing. A list of the areas for CTE Skill Standards and the areas for CTE State Curriculum Guides is provided in Appendix B.

The state provides assistance with implementation of the standards through regulation and resources. The state allocates funding to the Regional Professional Development Programs (RPDPs), authorized as part of the Nevada Educational Reform Act of 1997 (NERA), to assist and support districts in standards training and implementation activities. NDE compiles a list of the curricular materials and textbooks that have been reviewed and adopted at the district/site-level and then forwarded to the State Board of Education for acceptance and inclusion as approved materials. The state also provides districts, schools, and teachers with a set of guidelines (developed and disseminated by the Nevada Council on Technology) for the review, selection and procurement of technology and software.

Curriculum in Nevada's Districts

Nevada Revised Statute requires districts and schools to develop and put into practice written curriculum that implements the Nevada content and achievement standards. This must occur at a minimum in core content areas, including ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies. The state has established protocols to guide district evaluation, decision-making, and selection of curriculum resources, textbooks, and instructional materials. RPDPs provide technical assistance and staff development support to facilitate district and school-based activities in curriculum mapping projects. Districts monitor the selection of curriculum materials and are responsible to ensure that materials selected follow state content standards (in accordance with NRS 392). The State Board of Education formed a task force to investigate the issue of alignment of standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment (See Appendix C).

Standards-Based Instruction

The state has high achievement expectations for its students as indicated through its aligned standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessments. The Nevada Content and Achievement Standards provide a comprehensive conceptual framework within which specific content is

identified in a K-12 sequence of study. The criterion-referenced testing program is designed to align standards-based assessment with standards-based instruction. Local assessments and classroom-based assessments are also a critical component of the alignment of standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Career and Technical Education has established ten program quality criteria standards to provide guidelines to initiate and direct the development and improvement of programs and to create consistency in education programs from district to district. The ten program quality criteria can be found in Appendix B.

Observation of the classroom is a necessary method of verifying that instruction is standards-based. At the current time, there is not a statewide systematic method for observing classrooms and collecting data on the alignment of standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment. The regions within the state have been working with a variety of techniques in order to verify standards-based instruction is being implemented in schools. A variety of formative and summative evaluation data is being collected to ensure that instruction leads to increases in student achievement.

The Western Regional Professional Development Program, the Northwest Regional Professional Development Program, and the Northeastern Regional Professional Development Program have incorporated the Teach for Success (T4S) Classroom Observation Protocol developed by WestEd (revised 2005) in their regions. The instructional strategies focused on in T4S were chosen based on research that shows their direct impact on student learning. This provides schools with observation data on instructional practices present at a school during a normal teaching day, and the data are presented to each school as a summary report of school-wide teaching strategies. Schools utilize T4S school profiles as one data source in creating the professional development component of the school improvement plan.

The Southern Regional Professional Development Program uses the Backwards Assessment Model (BAM) to support teacher development. One of the premises of BAM is that teachers use assessment of what they are currently doing in the classroom to drive instruction. This process has the teachers observing their own classroom practices through assessment to determine standards-based instructional needs. BAM focuses professional development on what teachers teach, how they teach it, their students' performance, and changes in instructional strategies that would result in increased student achievement. Teachers meet by grade or subject level at their school sites to increase their content knowledge and share their successful instructional strategies, resources and expertise with one another as active participants in their own professional development.

Difficulty exists in acquiring evidence that demonstrates exactly which instructional practices are increasing student achievement. Consistent, ongoing, and comprehensive analyses of the multitude of factors influencing both quality instruction and student learning need to occur. A potential factor in increasing student achievement is the alignment of instruction to a standards-based curriculum. The Nevada Department of Education has designed the Nevada Comprehensive Curriculum Alignment Tool (NCCAT) to assist districts and schools in analyzing where there are gaps in alignment among the following elements:

- a. Alignment of curriculum to the state content and achievement **standards**;
- b. Alignment of **instruction** to the aligned curriculum;
- c. Alignment of **assessment** to instruction and curriculum; and
- d. Alignment of **support** for implementation of curriculum in the areas of professional development, leadership, resource allocation and parent/community support.

NCCAT is based on indicators that research has shown are related to improved student achievement.

Intervention and Remediation Processes

The state and NDE provide funds, technical assistance, and support resources designed to help local schools plan and implement improvement initiatives. The state has developed the SAGE research-based school improvement process that is mandatory for Title I schools in need of improvement. State law requires all schools and districts to develop a school improvement plan, whether the school or district is designated as needing improvement or not. A template for school plans has been developed and aligns with the requirements of the SAGE process. NDE has held informational meetings and institutes to build the capacity of districts and the RPDPs to support schools that are required to develop improvement plans.

The NDE is collaborating with the Instructional Consultation Lab at the University of Maryland to support the development of Intervention Systems in pilot schools across Nevada. Twelve districts are participating in this systems change initiative to develop intervention systems that support four essential components: data-based decision making; collaborative problem solving, monitoring for progress (a.k.a. Assessment for Learning), and interventions. The NDE supports a multi-tiered approach to intervention, wherein different levels of intervention are provided at different tiers, based on intensity and duration of the instructional intervention needed. In this model, all students have access to any of the tiers at any time based upon team determination. While this is a general education initiative, an added benefit of this pilot program is to inform future decision-making about the foundations upon which districts may identify students as having specific learning disabilities.

For the 2005-2007 biennium, the Legislature set aside \$113,908,124 (SB404) to be used by public school districts and schools, including charter schools, for programs for Innovation and Prevention of Remediation Activities and/or Programs. Under this allocation, all school districts and public schools, including charter schools, were eligible to submit an application. The grants were based upon, and aligned with, their School/District Improvement Plans. The requested funds were focused on activities such as establishment of best practices, adoption of effective instruction strategies, special programs such as all day kindergarten, literacy programs, programs for Limited English Proficient students, specialized programs for mentoring school and district leadership, and evaluation of programs that includes impact on achievement.

The remaining \$22,000,000 was set aside for full day kindergarten for the 2007 fiscal year. The Commission approved a total of \$85,932,372 in funding for 465 schools and 17 school districts. A total of \$74,780,578 was awarded at the elementary level, and \$11,151,793 at the secondary level. The remaining funding was distributed through a

competitive grant application process during spring 2006 for distribution during the 2006-2007 school year. The Commission on Educational Excellence awarded a total of \$5,938,235 to 52 schools.

Professional Development

The state's organizational system and culture support professional development as evidenced by the Nevada State Board of Education Plan, the Regional Professional Development Programs and Statewide Coordinating Council, the Nevada SAGE School Improvement Process, and the Account for Programs for Innovation and the Prevention of Remediation. In addition to the Nevada Department of Education, school districts, RPDs, and institutions of higher education, other professional development partners available to Nevada's teachers include the Nevada Mathematics Council, the Nevada State Science Teachers' Association, the Nevada Association of School Administration, the International Center for Leadership in Education, the Center for Performance Assessment, and the Southwest Comprehensive Center.

Professional Development Opportunities for Administrators

Effective school leadership is one of the most critical ingredients for improving student achievement. Providing professional development to practicing school administrators throughout Nevada is essential. The increased demands of accountability on schools and districts translate into changing expectations for school leaders. Professional development efforts in the state address the need to ensure that highly qualified individuals in urban and rural communities are leading Nevada schools.

Nevada School Leadership Outreach Initiative for Nevada Administrators. The Nevada School Leadership Outreach Initiative has been providing training and support to Nevada administrators as they work with the changing populations of Nevada. The Outreach Initiative's focus on equity and excellence for all students has served as the foundation for the design of the professional development offerings for school leaders. Administrator workshops that provided information about ways to improve the support they give their teachers have been held across the state. Knowledge and skills development has focused on leadership behaviors that ensure teachers have the necessary skill sets to differentiate instruction, monitor student progress, collaborate with multi-disciplinary peers, and provide appropriate interventions. Additionally, administrators have been provided opportunities to gain better understanding of the important role they play in creating learning environments that emphasize academic success for all students.

Nevada Association of School Administrators (NASA). The Regional Professional Development Program Statewide Coordinating Council continued to provide support to NASA in 2005-2006. Sponsored activities included superintendents' workshops and principals' workshops such as "Breaking Ranks II – High School Reform" and "Best Practices for Principals for Improving Student Achievement: Leadership; Curriculum; Instruction; Assessment and Professional Development".

Nevada High School Improvement Summit. The second annual Nevada High School Improvement Summit, sponsored by the Nevada State Board of Education, the

Nevada Department of Education, the Nevada Association of School Administrators, and the Nevada Association of School Superintendents, took place in September 2006. The purpose of the summit was to update the status of high school improvement activities in the state and to plan for future activities. There was a broad representation of state-level and local-level educators, key legislators and staff, business and economic development leaders, post secondary education leadership, parent representatives and P-16 Council members.

UNLV Center for Outreach in School Leadership Development. The UNLV Center for Outreach in School Leadership Development and the Southern Nevada Regional Professional Development Program sponsored the Nevada Administrators Leadership Institute in Las Vegas in the summer 2006. This leadership institute provided administrators with a variety of workshops including offerings on professional learning communities, data use for school improvement, strategies to improve student behavior, and strategies for encouraging English language learners. This event was rated as highly valuable in administrative development. The UNLV Center and SNRPDP are co-sponsoring a Middle Schools Summit in Las Vegas for secondary school administrators in December 2006 that will focus on research-based structures and concepts appropriate for middle level students. There will be a follow-up conference in spring 2007. The Center is also involved in the study of the Empowerment Schools in Clark County School District. The purpose of the study is to explore the impact of greater autonomy and support on student achievement and school success.

Professional Learning Community (PLC) Administrator Online Forum. There are 13 out of 17 districts supporting professional learning communities as a sustained, intensive school improvement professional development process for increasing student achievement. At this time, Eureka, Storey, Esmeralda, and Mineral school districts do not have professional learning communities implemented in their schools. Since April 2005, the NDE has moderated a Professional Learning Community Online Forum to support administrators at the school and district levels who are promoting, developing, and/or supporting PLCs in Nevada schools. The PLC forum is located on the NDE website under the Administrators' section. A list of resources is provided, as well as informational documents on PLC components and implementation. Participants have included school, district, Regional Professional Development Program, and Department of Education staff members. Administrators have posted their own stories about PLC implementation at the school and district levels, have asked and fielded questions, and have shared resources. A significant shared concern is finding creative ways to provide sufficient time for meaningful collaboration on a regular basis. Dr. Rick Stiggins, founder of the Assessment Training Institute, fielded questions for two weeks in November 2005 on quality classroom assessment for learning.

PD Opportunities for Teachers

NCLB requires that all core academic teachers receive "high-quality professional development" that meets the criteria contained in the definition of professional development in Title IX, Section 9101(34) of ESEA (the definition is provided in Appendix D) in order to meet the "highly qualified" requirements and be effective.

Regional Professional Development Programs (RPDPs). The legislation that established the RPDPs included a mandate for an annual self-evaluation report from each region. These reports are available for the period from July 2005 through August 2006. They provide details on needs assessment, activities and evaluation. Following are highlights from the reports.

Northeastern Nevada Regional Professional Development Program (NNRPDP)
(serving Elko, Eureka, Humboldt, Lander, and White Pine County educators)

Regional coordinators, a contracted evaluator and a technology specialist work to gather school site and class level needs assessment and evaluation data. The NNRPDP is written into the professional development plan of every school and district improvement plan. Professional development is provided in the areas of effective instruction, collaboration and instructional leadership. Curriculum content is often delivered to provide effective instruction through collaboration and assessment. The NNRPDP is also active in the new teacher induction and coaching programs. In the few schools needing intensive technical assistance, the regional coordinators developed classroom observation tools and feedback protocols to record and measure what changes teachers made to their instruction and how these changes impacted their students. In addition to collecting and analyzing data, several regional coordinators began site studies (currently in draft form) at three schools as a way to qualitatively and quantitatively describe what happens to the school, teachers and students with focused, intensive professional development intervention at the school level. In September 2006 this report as well as an additional internal evaluation will be reviewed to discern program strengths and areas of need to refine NNRPDP work for the upcoming year.

Northwest Regional Professional Development Program (NWRPDP)
(serving Pershing, Storey and Washoe County educators)

NWRPDP trainings focus on the following key areas: Nevada's academic standards, assessment of student performance, instructional planning and pedagogy, and core curriculum content (math, science, language arts, and social studies). The NWRPDP supports schools designated "in need of improvement" based upon making "adequate yearly progress." It provides direct assistance in school improvement planning, focusing on implementation and monitoring of professional development plans related to school improvement goals. School and district improvement plans are the primary method for determining professional development needs and designing initiatives to meet those needs. Over 2,200 staff participated in NWRPDP sponsored professional development activities and over 7,000 participants in terms of duplicated counts.

Participants' learning and use of new knowledge and skills are assessed through a variety of written post-tests, surveys, interviews, classroom observations, and tracer studies. Links between RPDP professional development and resultant changes in each teacher's students is identified through the use of case studies and the analysis of disaggregated and cross-tabulated data. Each district in the region is beginning to implement formative assessments and this data has the potential to provide more specific information about how the implementation of professional learning impacts student achievement.

Southern Nevada Regional Professional Development Program (SNRPDP)
(serving Clark, Esmeralda Lincoln and Nye County educators)

While content training is the main thrust of the SNRPDP, the Components of an Effective Lesson, *teacher expectancies*, and the Backwards Assessment Model serve as structures that support teacher development.

The average increase on the state assessments for the 27 schools participating in the Middle School Certificate Program (based on the Nevada standards) with three or more teachers trained was 13.5% while the other schools showed an average decrease of 1.8% on those tests. The SNRPDP currently does not have the personnel to follow up with all these teachers after the completion of the program about their implementation of content or instructional and assessment strategies. If follow up were possible, even greater sustainable gains could be possible.

Because of the geographic size of the southern Nevada region, challenges of financial and personnel resources, and growth in Clark County which results in hiring 1,500-2,000 new teachers and administrators per year, the SNRPDP's ability to provide professional development at individual schools, offer follow-up training in the classroom to ensure that the instructional strategies and content learned in training are being delivered to maximize student achievement, and assist in school improvement planning is limited. Evidence supports the achievement results that can occur when concentrated efforts and appropriate staffing are allocated, i.e. elementary literacy and middle school mathematics.

Western Nevada Regional Training Program (WNRTTP)
(serving Carson City and Churchill, Douglas, Lyon and Mineral County educators)

Approximately 70% of all WNRTTP sponsored staff development takes place at the school site being served to promote continuous job embedded staff development opportunities that are more likely to lead to the desired changes in teacher practice. All of the teaching staff in the region received training in the Teach for Success Classroom Observation Protocol (T4S), and all 52 schools participated in the T4S classroom observation project. The WNRTTP also developed and piloted a series of mathematics and English/language arts content-based classroom observation tools.

Support services were provided to schools and districts based on the needs identified in school and district improvement plans. Schools and districts that were identified by the state as being "in need of improvement" received the highest priority for support services. Mini-grants were issued for schools not making AYP and the focus was on the review, revision, implementation, and evaluation of each school's school improvement plan. Intensive technical assistance was provided to these schools by refocusing the staff on the analysis of their teaching practices and student learning. The funding enabled schools to provide teacher and administrator professional development according to its revised school improvement plan in specific content areas as well as in effective instructional strategies.

2006 Mega Conference. In May 2006, the International Center for Leadership in Education again partnered with the NDE to conduct the State's annual training conference for over 500 educators, including 39 school teams, of which 14 were from high schools across the state. The conference featured the successful practices of Model Schools that have increased student achievement through rigorous and relevant curriculum, as well as Nevada successful schools.

Intervention Systems Pilot - Professional Development Component. To support the development of Intervention Systems in pilot schools across Nevada, the NDE, in collaboration with the Instructional Consultation Lab, is providing ongoing professional development to learn how to build and sustain a team-based approach to analyze the instructional needs of students and change instruction, when necessary, to meet those needs. The focus is on ensuring that all students make growth in mastering state content standards, and that students do not wait to fail before receiving attention. The participating schools have committed one staff member to serve as the designated Instructional Consultation Facilitator. The professional development model being used supports the standards adopted by the RPDPs.

Student Achievement & Accountability

Nevada has maintained a heightened focus on student achievement for over ten years through a variety of means. This includes a lengthy history of high stakes student accountability founded on the High School Proficiency Examination (HSPE) program (dating back to the early 1980s) linked to graduation with a standard diploma. The development of a system of accountability reporting followed, and a more recent system of school designation that identified schools that were in need of improvement was established in the mid 1990s. Then in the early 2000s, Adequate Yearly Progress and its designation requirements were applied to all public schools in Nevada to comply with the federal NCLB Act.

Adequate Yearly Progress Results

A dominant aspect of the NCLB Act is its prescription for determining AYP and the requirement that it be used to judge all schools regardless of Title I status. A detailed description of the Nevada AYP components and the designation process can be found at the NDE website at http://www.doe.nv.gov/accountability/ayp/ayp_materials.html.

Classification of a school, school district, and/or state as making or failing AYP is relative to performance on the AYP indicators. A significant aspect of the legislation is that judgments must be considered separately for major ethnic groups and special student populations. Not meeting the participation rate, achievement level, or other indicator, by any student group, results in the classification of the school, school district, and/or state as not making AYP. Schools (school districts and/or the state) that fail to make AYP for two consecutive years are identified as In Need of Improvement. Designated schools are faced with specific consequences, and as the number of successive years of designation increases so does the significance of the consequences. Schools and school districts that are designated as In Need of Improvement are entitled to technical assistance and support from the state.

Based on performance, schools and school districts that make AYP can be designated as demonstrating Exemplary or High Achievement. This designation is based on the percentages of students at or above proficiency and the reduction in percentage of students that are not proficient. To achieve Exemplary status, both criteria must be met. Meeting either criterion results in being designated as a High Achieving school. Schools and districts that earn these designations are publicly recognized. Schools that fail to make AYP can still be recognized for making significant improvements toward the state proficiency targets.

Table 1 below details the AYP results for the 2003-2004, 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 school years. In 2005-2006, of the 582 total schools & programs, 46% did not make AYP, compared to 53% and 37% in the previous years, respectively. These results show a moderate increase in student performance, although significant concerns remain in districts and schools.

Table 1 – AYP Results for 2003-2004, 2004-2005, and 2005-2006

AYP RESULTS	2003-2004				2004-2005				2005-2006			
	ES	MS	HS	NV	ES	MS	HS	NV	ES	MS	HS	NV
Number of Schools	331	117	119	567	343	133	132	608	347	107	128	582
AYP School Classification												
Made AYP	240	60	57	357	157	57	71	285	206	45	63	314
Did Not Make AYP	91	57	62	210	186	76	61	323	141	62	65	268
AYP School Designation												
Exemplary	1	7	4	12	2	1	2	5	4	0	13	17
High Achieving	28	25	17	70	21	13	18	52	50	10	20	80
Adequate	200	28	36	264	132	39	41	212	152	35	30	217
Watch List	49	19	31	99	115	30	20	165	29	8	18	55
In Need of Improvement (Year 1)	31	35	31	97	25	13	20	58	43	16	7	66
In Need of Improvement (Year 1 – Hold)	6	0	0	6	2	4	10	16	15	3	8	26
In Need of Improvement (Year 2)	9	3	0	12	31	30	21	82	9	6	12	27
In Need of Improvement (Year 2 – Hold)	5	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	16	9	8	33
In Need of Improvement (Year 3)	2	0	0	2	13	3	0	16	14	17	12	43
In Need of Improvement (Year 3 – Hold)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	9
In Need of Improvement (Year 4)	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	4	3	0	7
In Need of Improvement (Year 4 - Hold)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	2

In the state as a whole, 15 of Nevada’s 17 school districts have made AYP; two of those are on hold status of In Need of Improvement – Year 2. One school district is on the Watch List and one has been identified as In Need of Improvement – Year 3. No school districts received Exemplary Achievement or High Achievement designations in 2005-2006.

All 17 school districts submitted District Improvement Plans in December 2005 pursuant to the requirements of state law. The majority of districts identified improvement needs in ELA and math for all students. More than half of the districts identified improvement needs for the IEP, LEP, and FRL student populations. The majority of the districts included a goal relating to professional development that focused on their specific improvement needs. Many districts included goals that targeted instructional and remediation enhancements, assessment and data use, and the needs of struggling student populations (See Appendix E for summary details of the District Improvement Plans).

Nevada’s data are consistent with AYP trends across the nation. The AYP summary can point to significant areas of concern at the state, school district, and school levels. However, the information provided through accountability is the starting point. To identify the specific strengths and weaknesses necessary to plan effectively for change, it is important to take a look at the performance data from the state assessments.

State Assessment Program

The NDE now has implemented a complete statewide program of criterion-referenced tests (CRTs) for grades 3 through 8 and high school that meet the testing requirements of NCLB and which are being used to determine whether or not schools and districts within the state have met the AYP federal requirements. Table 2 illustrates the large-scale assessment system in the state.

Table 2 - Current State Assessment Program

	2005-2006	2006-2007
Grade 3	CRT—Reading, Math	CRT—Reading, Math
Grade 4	<i>NRT—ELA, Math, SCI</i> CRT—Reading, Math, <i>SCI</i>	<i>NRT—ELA, Math, SCI</i> CRT—Reading, Math, <i>SCI</i>
Grade 5	CRT—Reading, Math, <i>SCI</i> Performance—Writing	CRT—Reading, Math, <i>SCI</i> Performance—Writing
Grade 6	CRT—Reading, Math, <i>SCI</i>	CRT—Reading, Math, <i>SCI</i>
Grade 7	<i>NRT—ELA, Math, SCI</i> CRT—Reading, Math, <i>SCI</i>	<i>NRT—ELA, Math, SCI</i> CRT—Reading, Math, <i>SCI</i>
Grade 8	CRT—Reading, Math, <i>SCI</i> Performance—Writing	CRT—Reading, Math, <i>SCI</i> Performance—Writing
High School	<i>NRT—ELA, Math, SCI</i> CRT—Reading, Math Performance—Writing	<i>NRT—ELA, Math, SCI</i> CRT—Reading, Math Performance—Writing

Note: The assessments that are italicized are not part of the state’s AYP calculations.

In addition to the assessments listed in Table 2, students with the most significant disabilities may be eligible to take the Nevada Alternate Scales of Academic Achievement (NASAA). Other assessments include the English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) Title III language acquisition test and the various tests administered locally by school districts and

schools. The districts are at different stages of development and implementation of local interim assessments, with the assessments ultimately intended to provide benchmark data to schools and teachers to assist them in monitoring the students' progress towards proficiency of the state standards.

The state also administers a norm-referenced test (NRT) in 4th, 7th, and 10th grades, which provides national comparisons and validates the results of the standards-based tests at the other grade levels. Also, a selected sample of Nevada students participates in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in reading and math.

The graphs that follow describe state-level test results, focusing on those tests used to determine AYP. The overall state performance averages are included on the graphs illustrating the major ethnic groups and the special populations. Limited English Proficient (LEP) and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) student identification criteria includes functioning that is often below grade level; consequently the performance of LEP and IEP students is anticipated to be lower than the state average. Therefore, comparisons are made on LEP and IEP performance trends. An additional consideration in reviewing the following Special Population graphs is that the LEP student group in the 2006 results included all students ever previously served, not only current LEP students.

Reading Performance

The graphs that follow describe state-level test results in reading by year of test administration, allowing for across-year comparisons.

Grade 3

Figures 2 and 3 illustrate trends in reading performance for third grade by ethnicity and special populations.

Figure 2 – Ethnicity

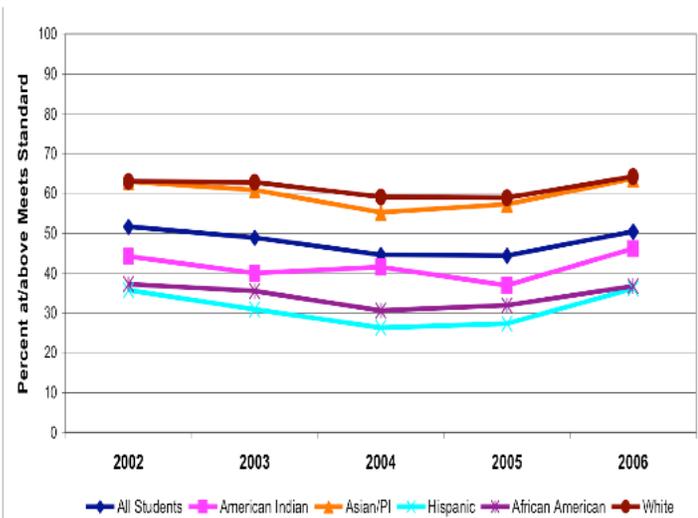
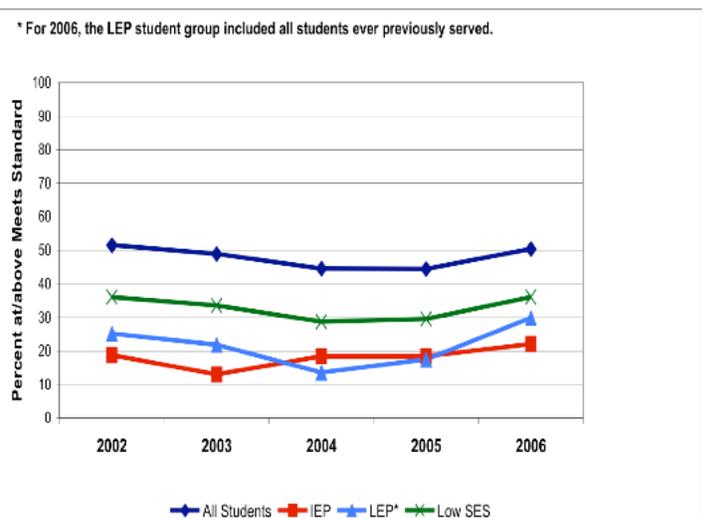


Figure 3 – Special Populations



Across the five-year period there appears to have been a small but significant decline in performance by all student groups (except IEP) until 2006, which showed a slight increase. The greatest decline was observed with the Hispanic and LEP student populations. The White and Asian student groups consistently performed above the state average while all other ethnic groups performed below or significantly below the state average.

Grade 4

Figures 4 and 5 illustrate reading performance results for fourth grade by ethnicity and special populations for the 2005-2006 school year. The fourth grade CRT was implemented during this year. The performance of the Hispanic and African American student populations is significantly lower than the other student groups.

Figure 4 – Ethnicity

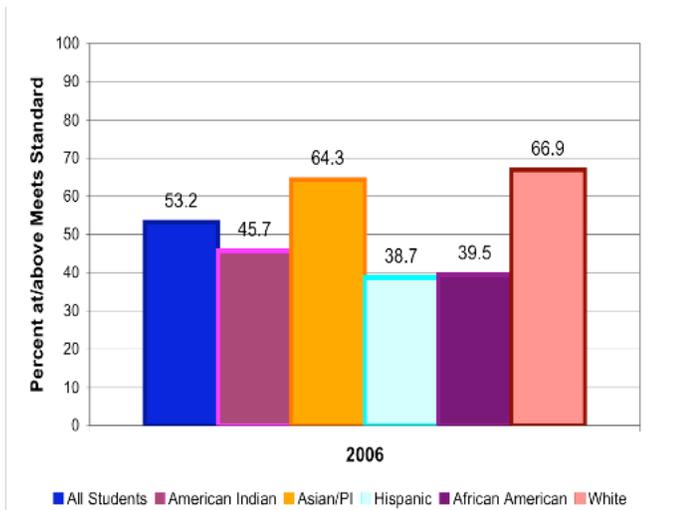
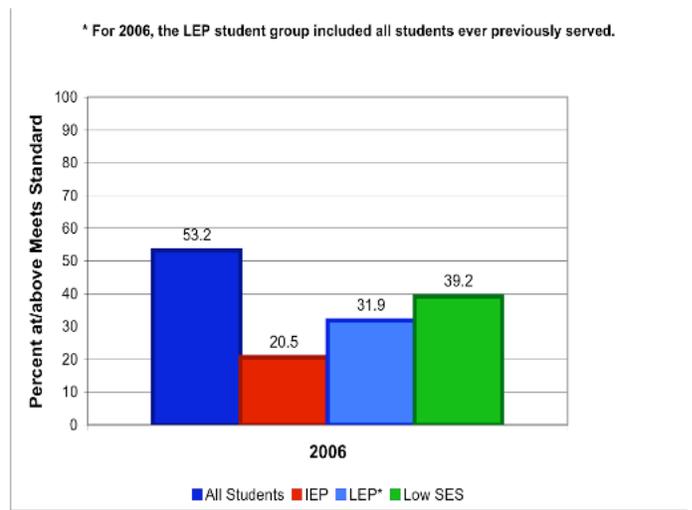


Figure 5 – Special Populations



Grade 5

Figures 6 and 7 illustrate trends in reading performance for fifth grade by ethnicity and special populations. Across the five-year period there appears to have been a small but significant decline in performance for all student groups (apart from the LEP exception in 2006 as noted in Figure 7). The White and Asian student groups consistently performed above the state average while all other ethnic groups performed below or significantly below the state average.

Figure 6 – Ethnicity

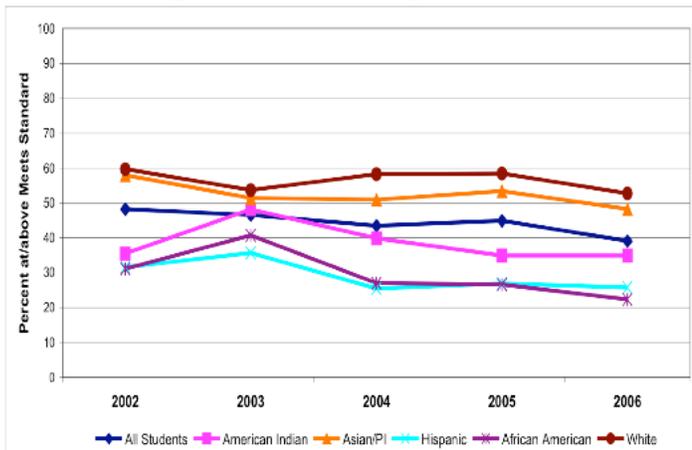
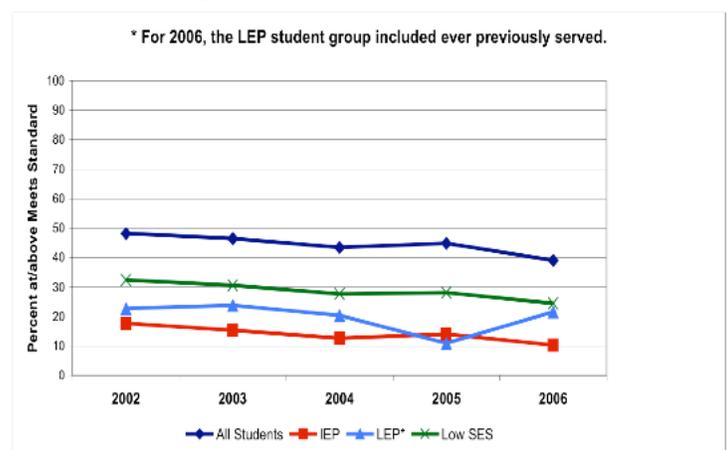


Figure 7 – Special Populations



Grade 6

Figures 8 and 9 illustrate reading performance results for sixth grade by ethnicity and special populations for the 2005-2006 school year. The sixth grade CRT was implemented during this year. The performance of the Hispanic and African American student populations is significantly lower than the other student groups.

Figure 8 – Ethnicity

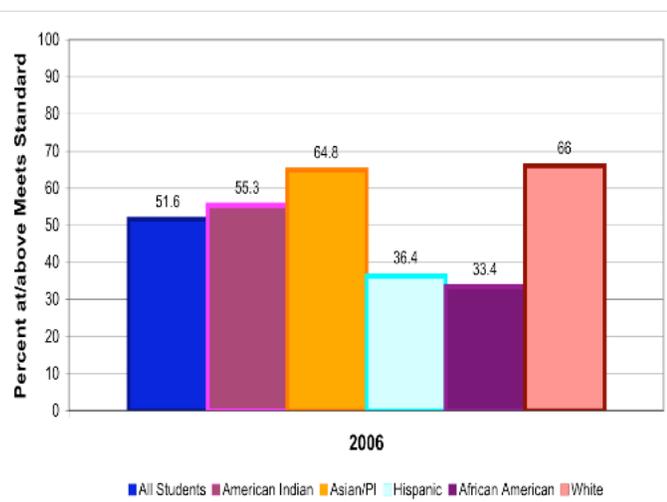
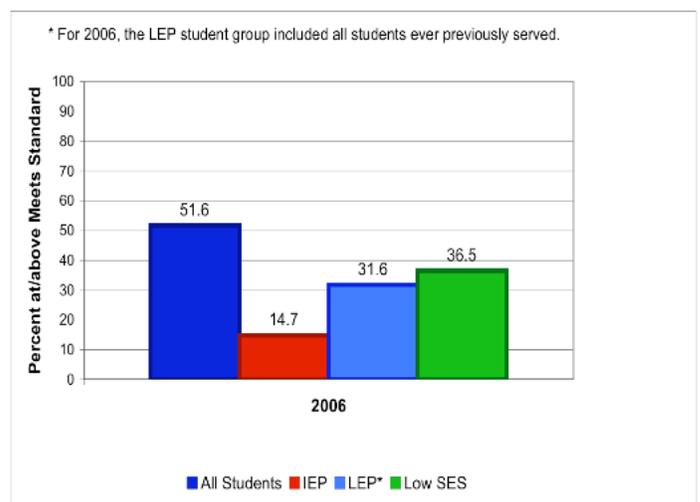


Figure 9 – Special Populations



Grade 7

Figures 10 and 11 illustrate reading performance results for seventh grade by ethnicity and special populations for the 2005-2006 school year. The seventh grade CRT was implemented during this year. The performance of the Hispanic and African American student populations is significantly lower than the other student groups.

Figure 10 – Ethnicity

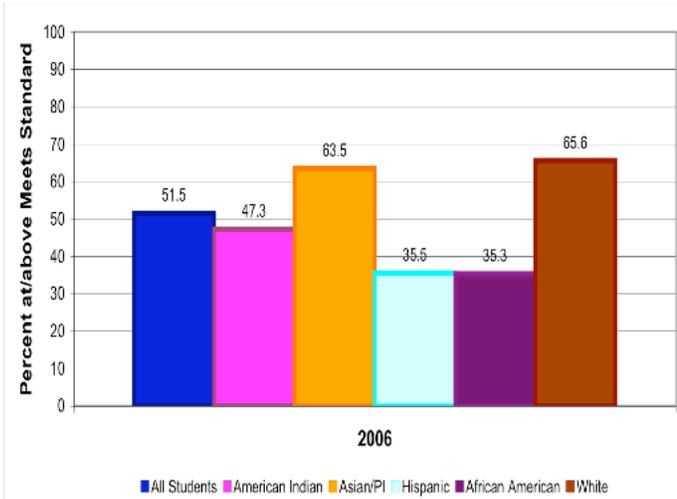
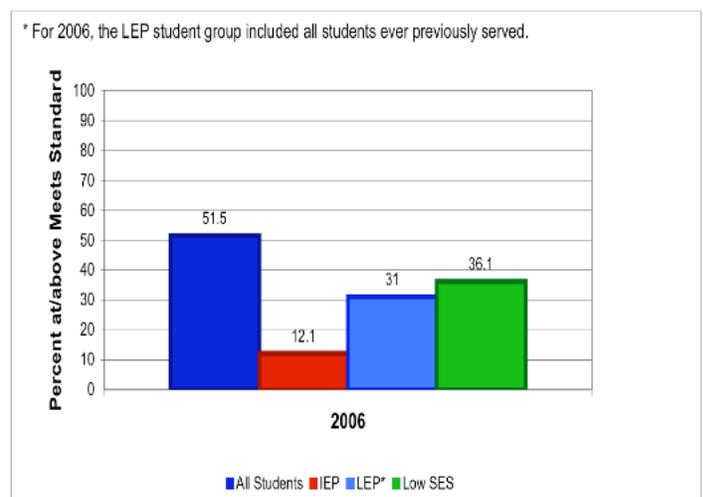


Figure 11 – Special Populations



Grade 8

Figures 12 and 13 illustrate trends in reading performance for eighth grade by ethnicity and special populations. The 8th grade reading test has been administered for three years. Performance for all the student groups is relatively flat (apart from the LEP exception in 2006 as noted in Figure 13). The White and Asian student groups consistently performed above the state average while all other ethnic groups performed below or significantly below the state average.

Figure 12 – Ethnicity

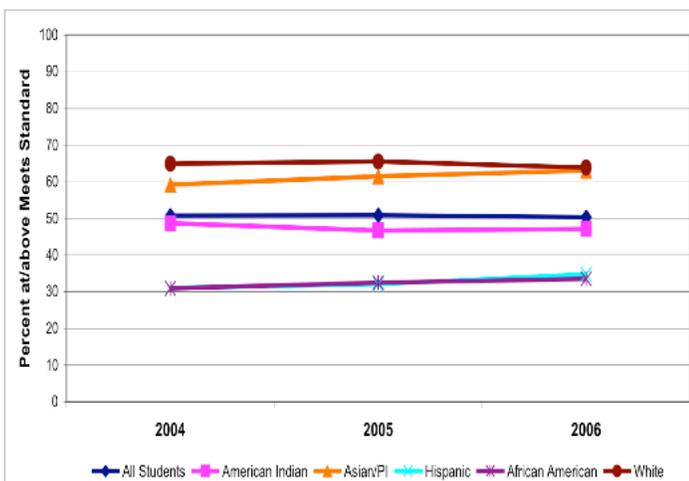
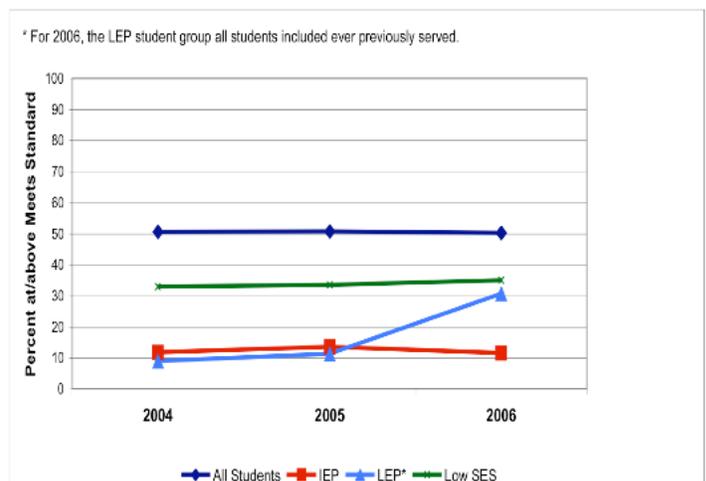


Figure 13 – Special Populations



Grade 10

Figures 14 and 15 illustrate trends in reading performance for tenth grade by ethnicity and special populations. Across the five-year period there appears to have been a small but significant increase for all student groups. The American Indian and LEP student groups had the greatest increase in percent proficient in the five-year period (apart from the LEP exception in 2006 as noted in Figure 15). The White and Asian student groups consistently performed above the state average while all other ethnic groups performed below or significantly below the state average.

Figure 14 – Ethnicity

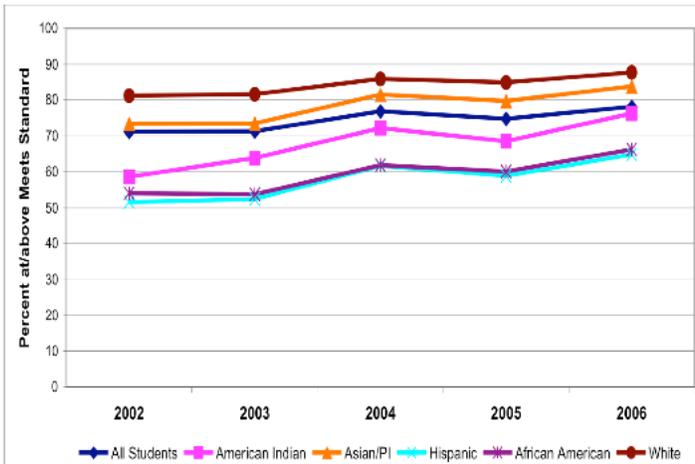
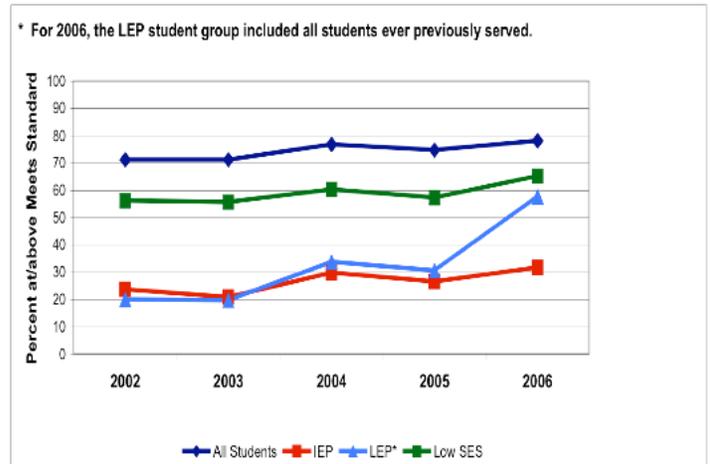


Figure 15 – Special Populations



Mathematics Performance

The graphs that follow describe state-level test results in mathematics by year of test administration, allowing for across-year comparisons.

Grade 3

Figures 16 and 17 illustrate trends in mathematics performance for third grade by ethnicity and special populations. Across the five-year period there appears to have been a decline in performance for all student groups (except LEP and IEP) from 2002 to 2004, then a significant increase in 2005, which brought them back to the 2002 performance levels. This 2005 increase occurred the same year that the AYP target increased from 34.5% proficient to 45.4% proficient. The LEP student group made gains and losses that brought them only 1% higher than the 2002 performance level. The IEP student group has made significant gains since 2003. The White and Asian student groups consistently performed above the state average while all other ethnic groups performed below or significantly below the state average.

Figure 16 – Ethnicity

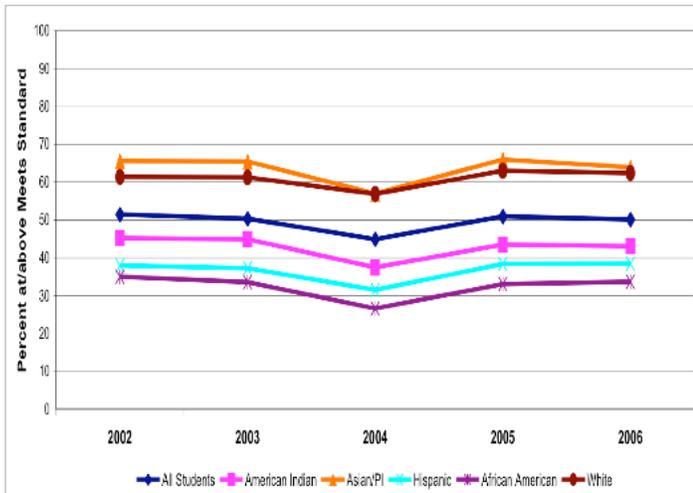
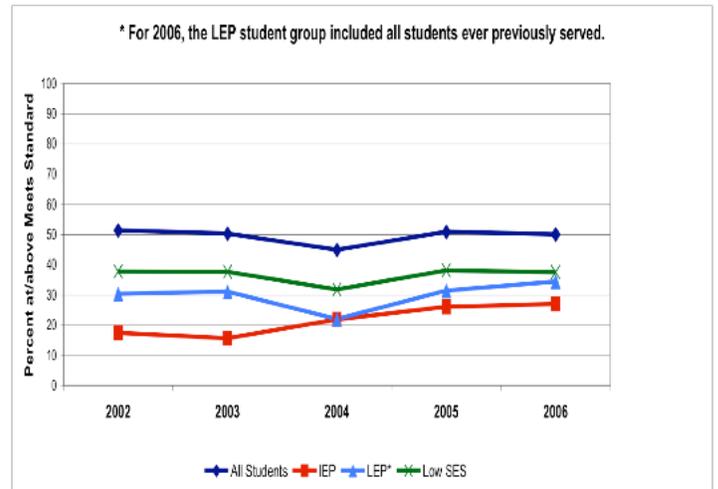


Figure 17 – Special Populations



Grade 4

Figures 18 and 19 illustrate mathematics performance results for fourth grade by ethnicity and special populations for the 2005-2006 school year. The fourth grade CRT was implemented during this year. The performance of the American Indian, Hispanic, and African American student populations is significantly lower than the other student groups.

Figure 18 – Ethnicity

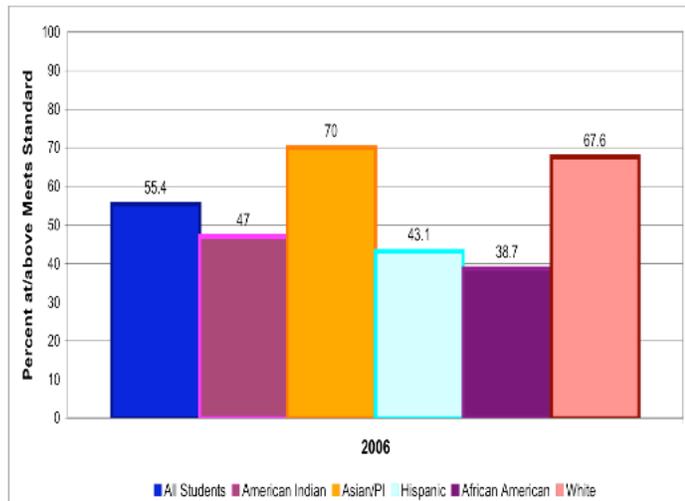
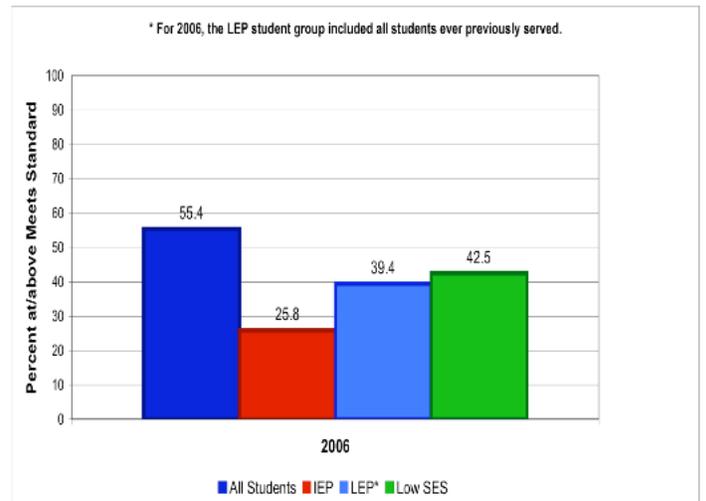


Figure 19 – Special Populations



Grade 5

Figures 20 and 21 illustrate trends in mathematics performance for fifth grade by ethnicity and special populations. Across the five-year period there appears to have been a variation in the performance trends of all the student groups, with most student groups making modest gains from 2002 to 2005. This was not the case, however, for the IEP student group, which has remained flat, and the LEP student group, which demonstrated a decline in the percentage of students meeting the target (then an increase with the LEP exception in 2006 as noted in Figure 21). The White and Asian student groups consistently performed above the state average while all other ethnic groups performed below or significantly below the state average.

Figure 21 – Ethnicity

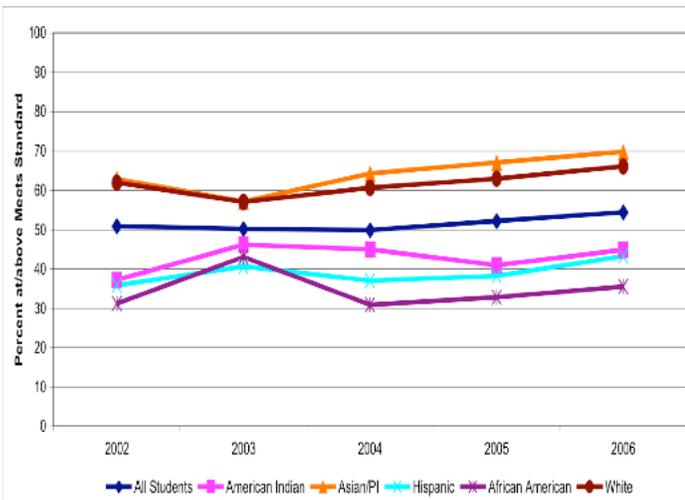
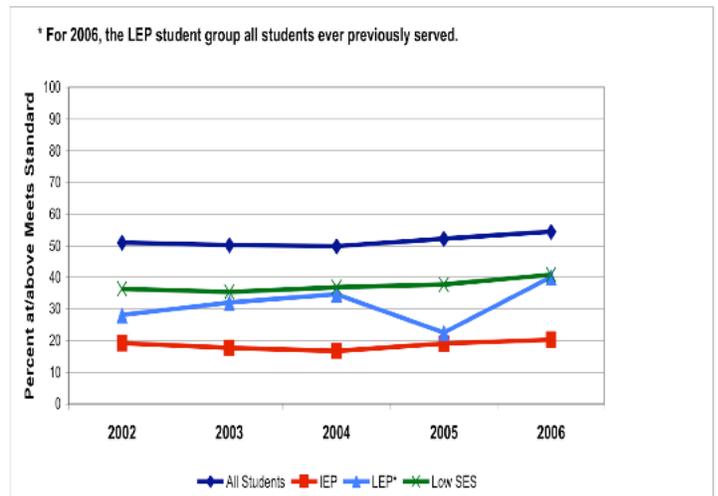


Figure 22 – Special Populations



Grade 6

Figures 22 and 23 illustrate mathematics performance results for sixth grade by ethnicity and special populations for the 2005-2006 school year.

Figure 22 – Ethnicity

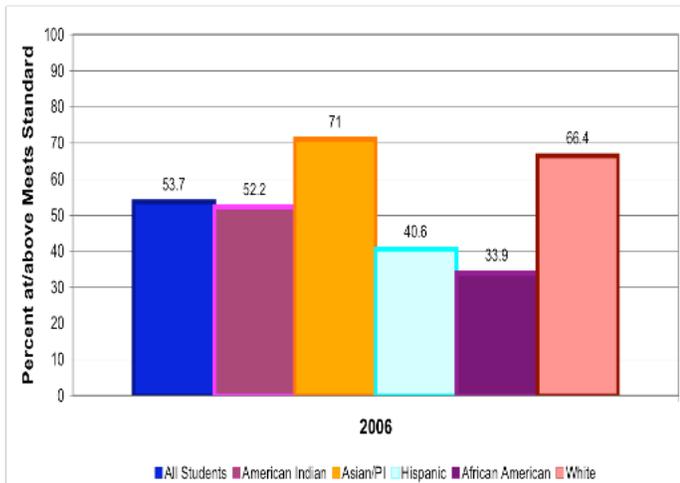
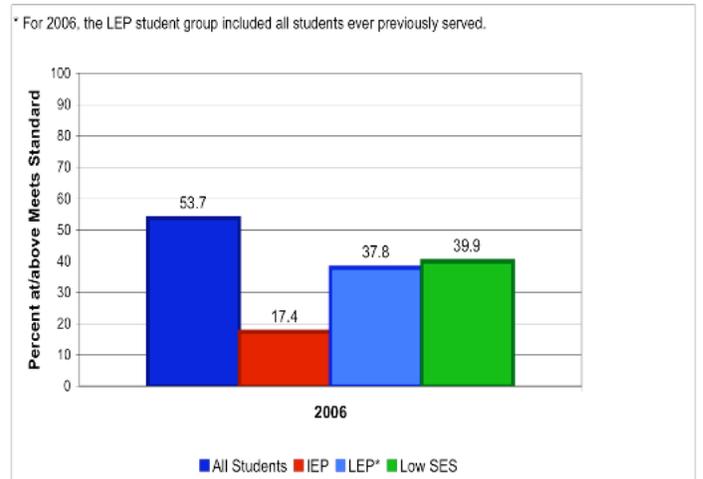


Figure 23 – Special Populations



The sixth grade CRT was implemented during this year. The performance of the Hispanic and African American student populations is significantly lower than the other student groups. The White and Asian student population are significantly above the state average.

Grade 7

Figures 24 and 25 illustrate mathematics performance results for seventh grade by ethnicity and special populations for the 2005-2006 school year. The seventh grade CRT was implemented during this year. The performance of the Hispanic and African American student populations is significantly lower than the other ethnic groups.

Figure 24 – Ethnicity

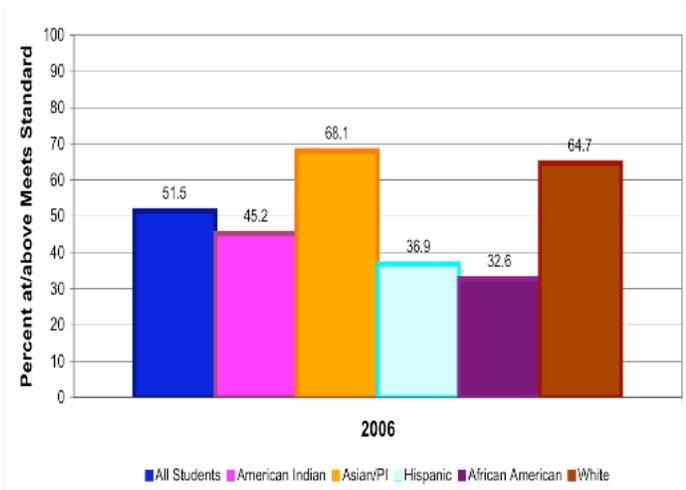
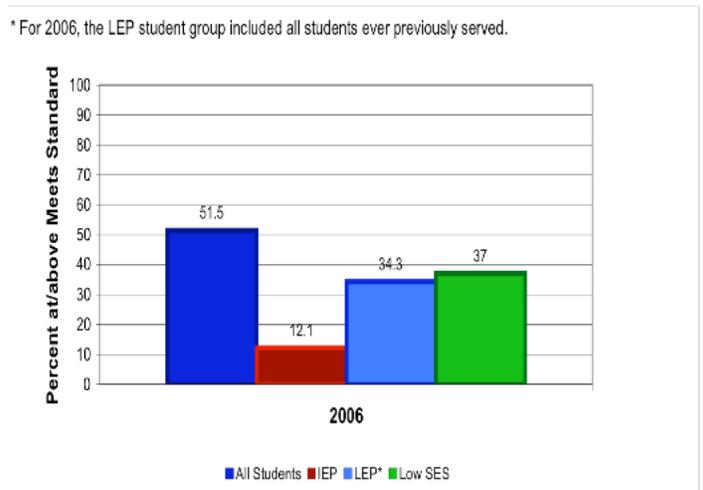


Figure 25 – Special Populations



Grade 8

Figures 26 and 27 illustrate trends in mathematics performance for eight grade by ethnicity and special populations.

Figure 26 – Ethnicity

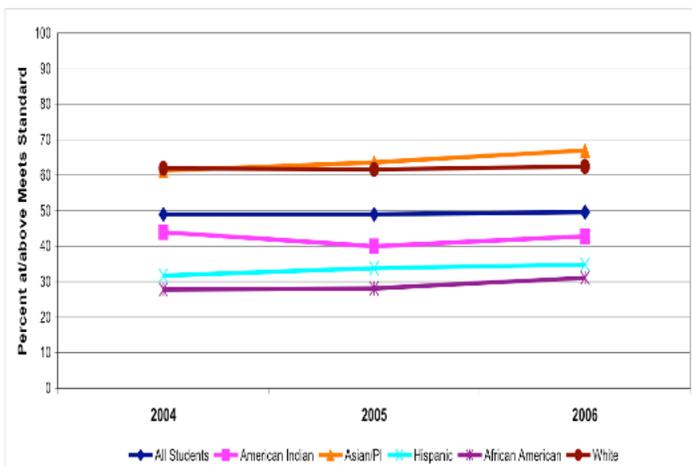
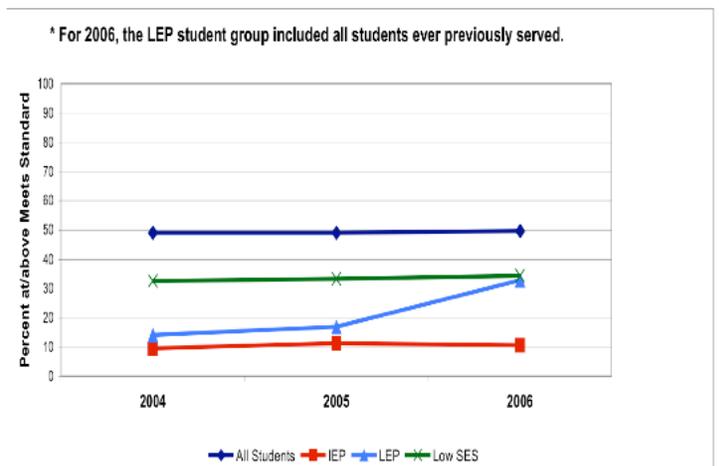


Figure 27 – Special Populations



Three years of data are available for 8th grade math performance. Performance for all the student groups is relatively flat (apart from the LEP exception in 2006 as noted in Figure 27). The White and Asian student groups consistently performed above the state average while all other ethnic groups performed below the state average.

Grade 10

Figures 28 and 29 illustrate trends in mathematics performance for tenth grade by ethnicity and special populations. Across the five-year period there appears to have been a small yet significant increase for all ethnic groups, with the African American student group showing only modest gains. From 2002 to 2005 the IEP, LEP, and Low SES student groups' performance was relatively flat, with slight yet significant gains in 2006. The White and Asian student groups consistently performed above the state average while all other ethnic groups performed below the state average.

Figure 28 – Ethnicity

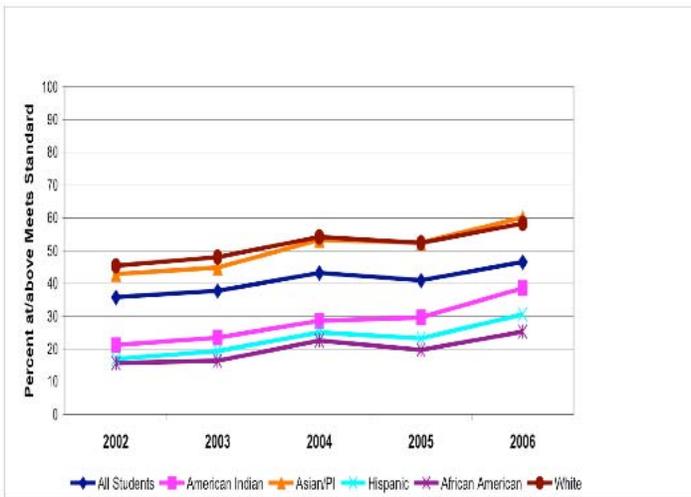
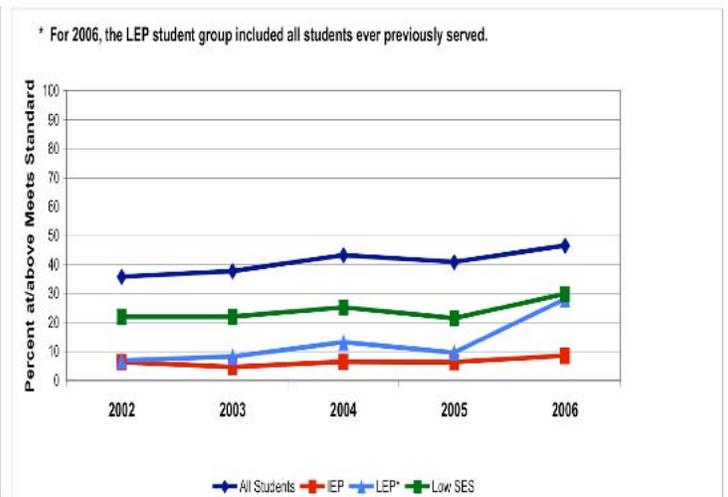


Figure 29 – Special Populations



WRITING PERFORMANCE

The graphs that follow describe writing performance by year of test administration. It is important to note that the 4th and 8th grade writing assessments were moved from the fall to the spring beginning the school year following the 2003 Legislative session. Because of this, it is difficult to compare performance from the 2003 school year with 2004 and 2005 performance. An additional change occurred in the 2005-2006 school year, with the writing test moving from 4th to 5th grades.

Grade 4

Figures 30 and 31 illustrate trends in writing performance for fourth grade by ethnicity and special populations. For all groups with the exception of the White and LEP student groups, the percentages of students meeting standard have increased over the three year period. From 2004 to 2005, the American Indian student group made the greatest gains. Over the

same time period there has been a decline in the percentage of LEP students who have met the standard. The White and Asian student groups consistently performed above the state average while all other ethnic groups performed below or significantly below the state average.

Figure 30 – Ethnicity

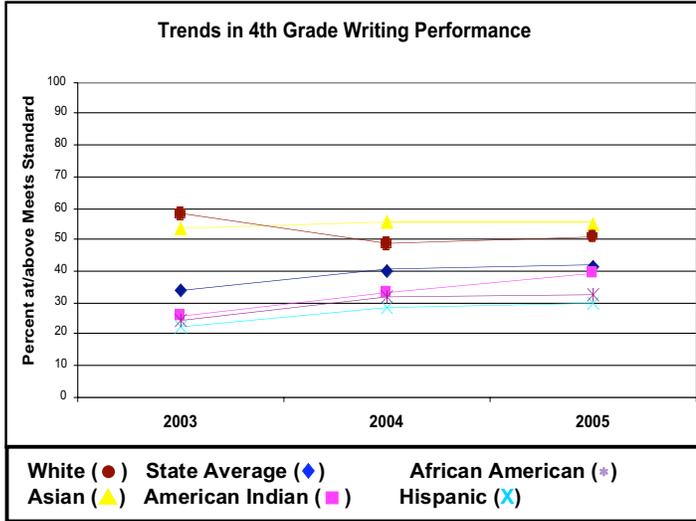
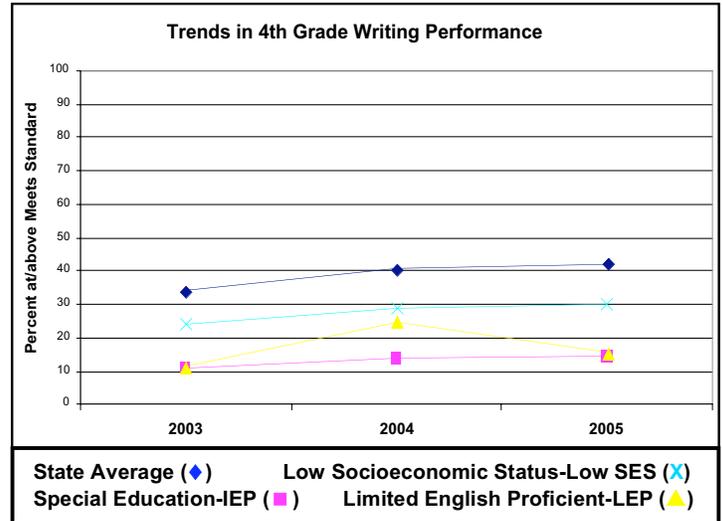


Figure 31 – Special Populations



Grade 5

Figures 32 and 33 illustrate writing performance results for fifth grade by ethnicity and special populations for the 2005-2006 school year. The writing test was administered in fifth grade for the first time during this year. The performance of the American Indian, Hispanic, and African American student populations are significantly lower than the White and Asian student populations.

Figure 32 – Ethnicity

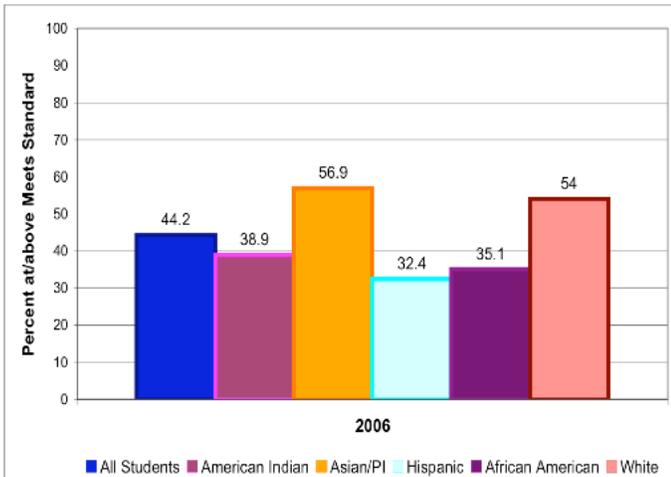
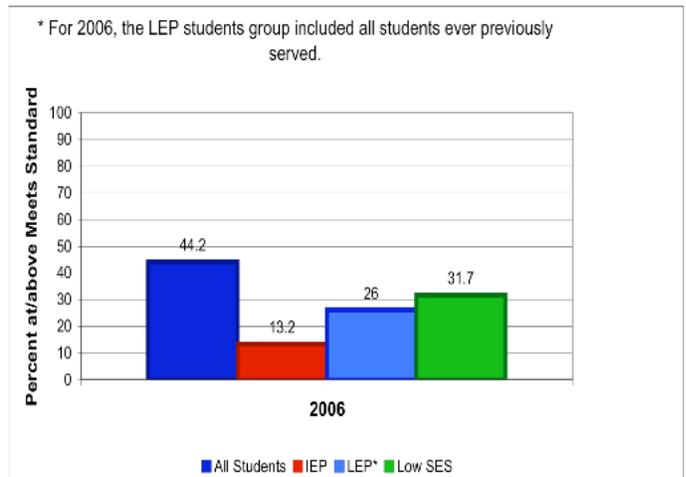


Figure 33 – Special Populations



Grade 8

Figures 34 and 35 illustrate trends in writing performance for eighth grade by ethnicity and special populations. From the Fall 2003 to Spring 2004 test administration, all student groups showed an increase in performance. From 2004 to 2006, all student groups showed a slight yet significant decline in performance (apart from the LEP exception in 2006 as noted in Figure 35). The White and Asian student groups consistently performed above the state average while all other ethnic groups performed below or significantly below the state average.

Figure 34 – Ethnicity

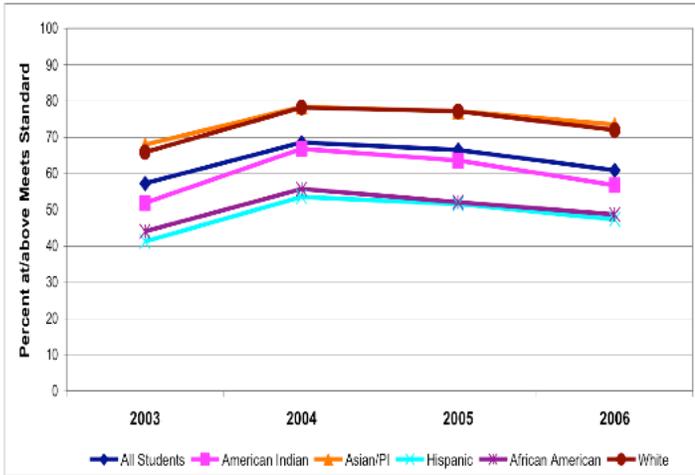
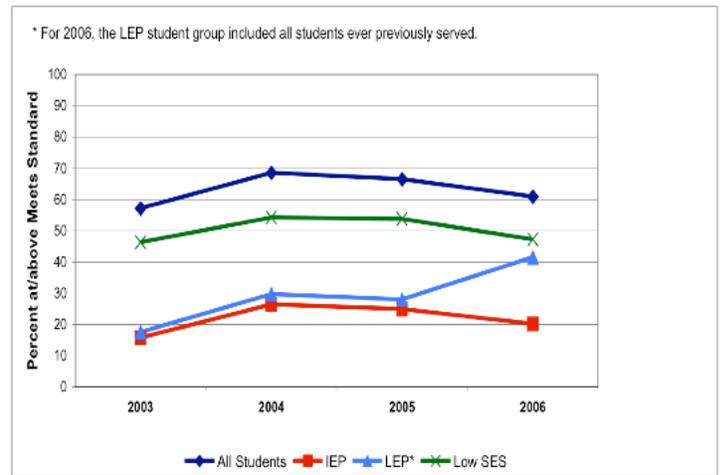


Figure 35 – Special Populations



Grade 11

Figures 36 and 37 illustrate trends in writing performance for eleventh grade by ethnicity and special populations.

Figure 36 – Ethnicity

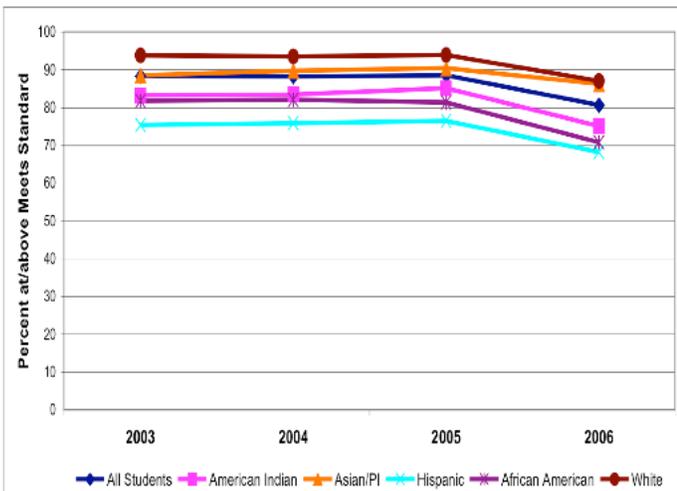
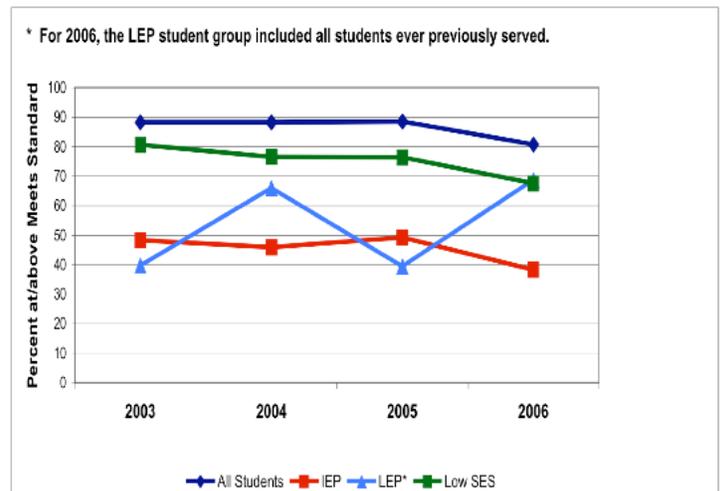


Figure 37 – Special Populations



During the past three years, there have been only slight gains among most student groups, with a significant decline in 2006 (apart from the LEP exception in 2006 as noted in Figure 37). The White and Asian student groups consistently performed above the state average while all other ethnic groups performed below or significantly below the state average. It is important to note that writing pass rates for first time test takers is much higher when compared to reading and math.

Special Education Performance Indicators

During the 2005-2006 school year the NDE began its development of the special education State Performance Plan by participating in the August, 2005, Summer Institute sponsored by the U.S. Office of Special Education Programs. Presenters at the Institute explained the statutory basis for requiring states to submit the State Performance Plan, introduced the 20 performance indicators now required to be analyzed on an annual basis, and provided technical assistance regarding the setting of the six-year targets to improve the performance of students with disabilities.

During the 2005-2006, school year the NDE collected relevant baseline data, analyzed the baseline data to inform the target-setting process, set measurable and rigorous targets for improvement, and designed improvement activities. Fourteen of the performance indicators specifically address improving student achievement in accordance with the IDEA and NCLB requirements. These indicators include the following areas relative to students with disabilities:

- 1) Improving graduation rates;
- 2) Decreasing the drop out rate;
- 3) Ensuring that all students participate in statewide assessments and improving the performance of students with disabilities in those assessments;
- 4) Reducing suspension and expulsion;
- 5) Providing school-age students with services in the least restrictive environment;
- 6) Providing preschool children with services in the least restrictive environment;
- 7) Improving cognitive and social outcomes for preschool children;
- 8) Improving parents' involvement in their children's special education programs;
- 9) Reducing disproportionate identification of students in race/ethnic groups as having a disability;
- 10) Reducing disproportionate identification of students in race/ethnic groups as having a particular disability;
- 11) Improving efforts to locate and serve students identified with a disability;
- 12) Ensuring a smooth transition from infant/toddler programs to school-based programs at age three;
- 13) Improving the transition planning for students at the secondary level; and
- 14) Improving the outcomes for students from secondary to post secondary activities.

Data will be reported on state and district level progress on the measurable targets beginning in February 2007. Activities that have been identified to assist the state and local districts meet the State Performance Plan targets include: the development and

implementation of data collection systems regarding the state's alternate assessment; an early childhood assessment; a 14-district, 17-school pilot program implementing a response to intervention model to address the needs of struggling learners; development of a data analysis protocol to evaluate students' access to the general curriculum; development of a professional development website; development of a central database for districts to access and use relative to school and district level special education data; and implementation of a data collection system to collect and analyze parent satisfaction data and post-school outcome data for students as they exit at the secondary level.

English Language Proficiency Achievement Objectives

The primary goal of the State's LEP and Immigrant program is to assist LEP students to achieve English language proficiency sufficient that they can meet the State's academic standards in an all-English speaking classroom/school and on State academic assessments in English. To that end, the State follows the requirements established in the NCLB act of 2001. As required, Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) have been established for LEP students. The English Language Proficiency Assessment was established to measure LEP student abilities to understand, speak, read, write and comprehend English. Each LEP student must, make progress in learning English, attain English language proficiency and meet state academic standards within the objective's specified time (eight years maximum).

The third year of statewide LEP testing occurred in the 2004-2005 school year. Of the 17 school districts, 10 fall under Title III and are measured against the AMAOs. The State and nine of the districts did not fully achieve their AMAOs for 2004-2005 school year. Of the 93% of all LEP students that made progress in learning English, 13% attained English language proficiency.

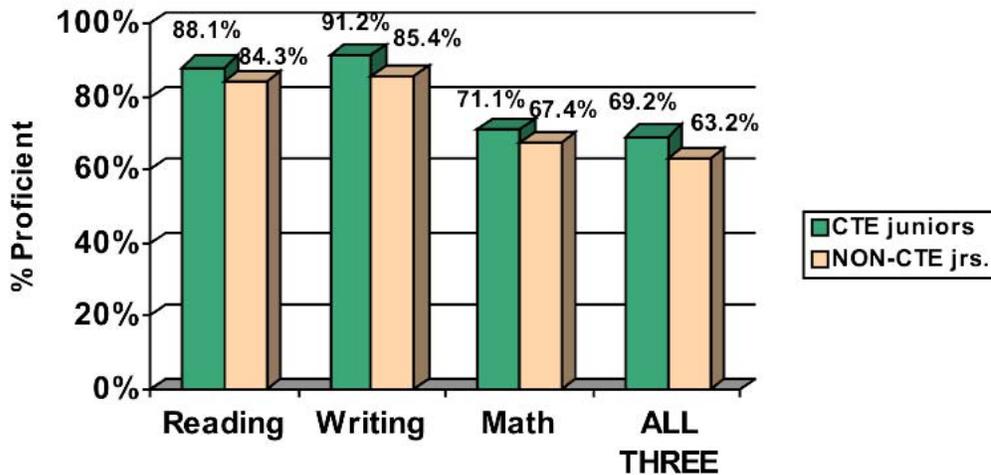
A new computer program was developed to calculate and analyze the large amount of data obtained from the new ELPA. The department then provided training and technical support for administration of the ELPA assessment, record keeping, reporting and use of resulting data to help schools better identify LEP student difficulties, which students need additional support and the type of support needed. Nevada's exceptionally fast growing LEP population presents many challenges that are being met with rapid major changes and improvements in the ESL program. Significant improvement must continue to be made in the ESL program and in regular classrooms to meet the academic needs of this sub-population.

Career and Technical Education Student Proficiency Results

Proficiency results indicate that a higher percentage of Career and Technical Education (CTE) high school juniors meet or exceed proficiency than is the case for those high school juniors who do not participate in CTE programs. CTE juniors were those enrolled in a CTE course in the fall of the junior year. To determine the proficiency results for students who were not in CTE programs, the CTE students were removed from the total population of juniors and the students who were not removed comprised the Non-CTE juniors.

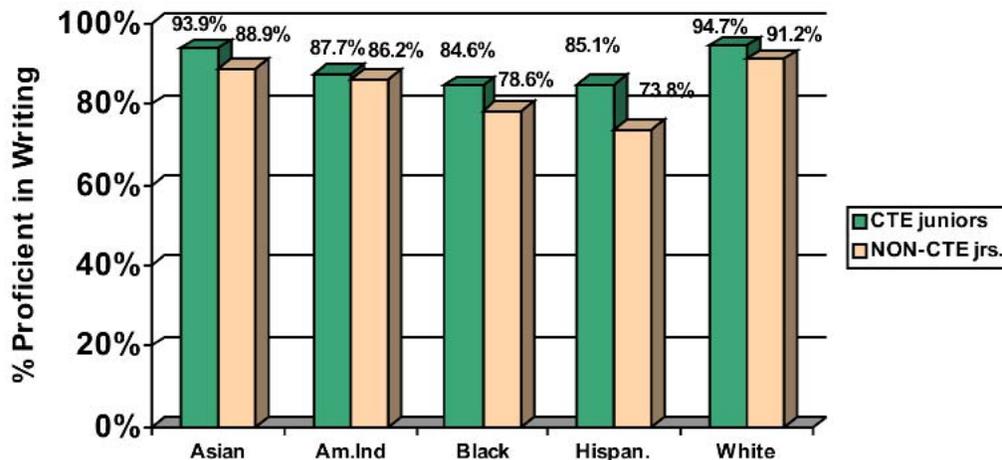
The percentage of CTE juniors proficient in *each one* of the three areas tested (reading, writing, mathematics) on the Nevada High School Proficiency Examination was higher than for non-CTE taking juniors (as shown in Figure 38). The percentage of CTE juniors proficient *in all three* areas was higher by over five percent. In order for students to receive a standard or advanced diploma, they must pass all three proficiency areas.

Figure 38 – Percent Proficiency of CTE Juniors and Non CTE Juniors



Like the results above, the following results for race/ethnicity groups and special populations are based on all tested students up through the spring of their junior year, not just for first-time test takers. Academic proficiency, as measured by the eligible juniors meeting or exceeding standards on the NHSPE, was higher for minority students who were enrolled in CTE programs than for minority students who weren't enrolled in CTE programs.

Figure 39 – Percent Proficiency of CTE Juniors and Non CTE Juniors



For writing proficiency, the percentage of proficient juniors for each student group taking CTE courses was higher than the percentage of proficient juniors that were not enrolled in CTE courses. The percentage of proficient Asian CTE juniors was five percent higher than their non-CTE counterpart. Likewise the percentage of proficient African American CTE juniors was six percent higher than their non-CTE counterpart. The differences are even more impressive for Hispanic CTE juniors whose proficient percentage was 11 percent higher than their non-CTE counterparts.

For reading proficiency, African American CTE juniors' percentage was nearly six percent higher than the non-CTE African American juniors and the Hispanic CTE juniors' percentage was over eight percent higher than the non-CTE Hispanic juniors.

Figure 40 – Percent Proficiency of CTE Juniors and Non CTE Juniors

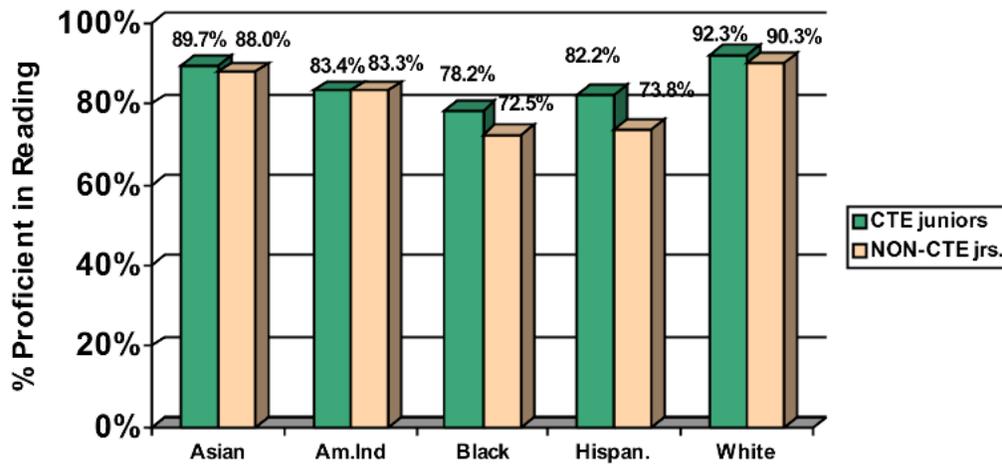
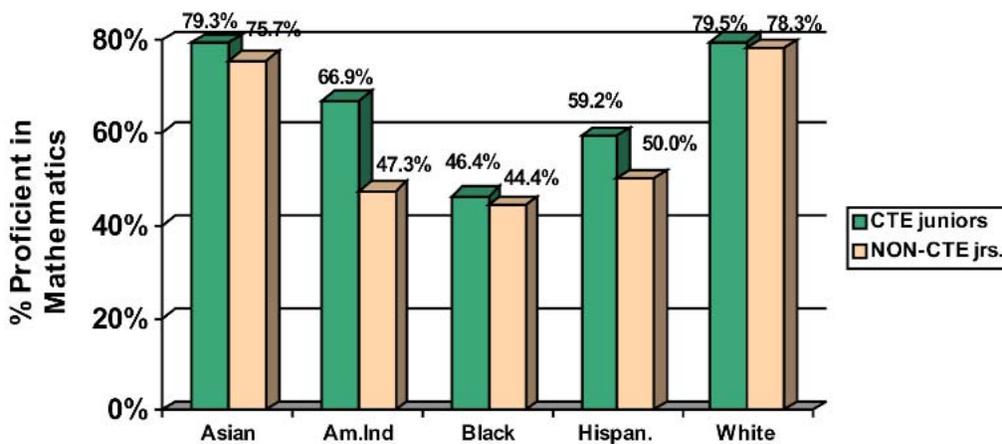


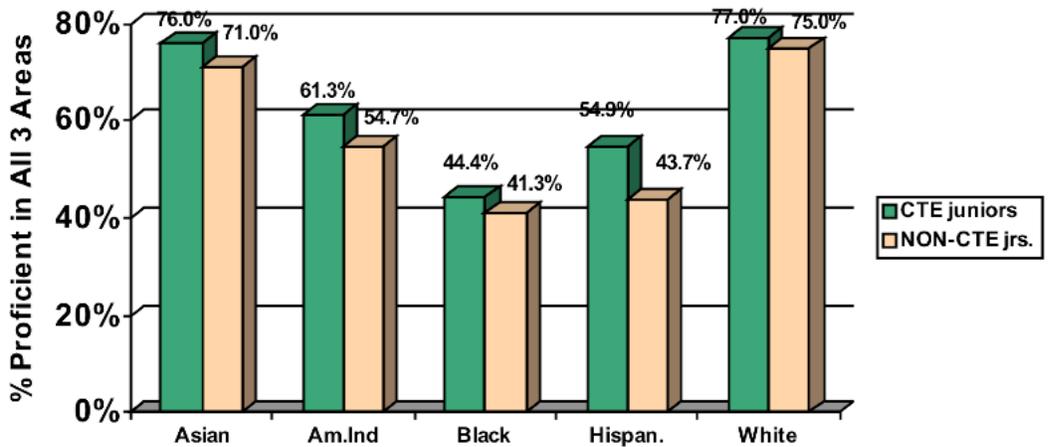
Figure 41 – Percent Proficiency of CTE Juniors and Non CTE Juniors



For mathematics proficiency, Asian CTE juniors' percentage was over four percent higher than the non-CTE Asian juniors. The highest jump in the percentages proficient were for CTE Hispanic juniors (over nine percent) and CTE American Indian juniors (nearly 20 percent).

As noted, proficiency in all three areas together is important for students seeking a regular or advanced diploma. The percentage of students' proficient in all three areas was higher for CTE juniors from each student group than for their counterparts. The increased percentages proficient in all three areas for CTE groups were: Whites two percent, African American three percent, both Asian and American Indian six percent, and Hispanic over 11 percent.

Figure 42 – Percent Proficiency of CTE Juniors and Non CTE Juniors



As illustrated in Figures 43 through 45 below, the percentage of juniors from special population groups who meet or exceed proficiency standards are higher for those juniors who participate in career and technical education programs.

Figure 43 – Percent Proficiency of CTE students with IEPs

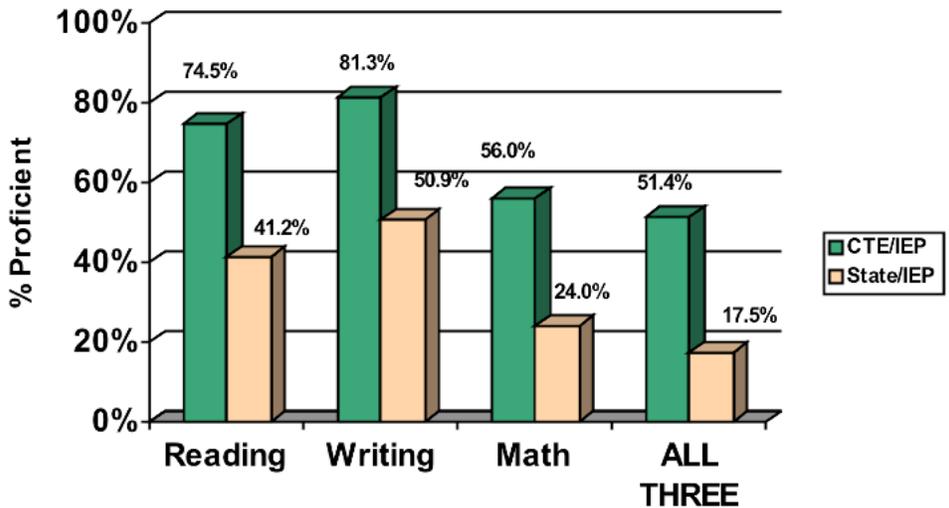


Figure 44 – Percent Proficiency of CTE students identified as LEP

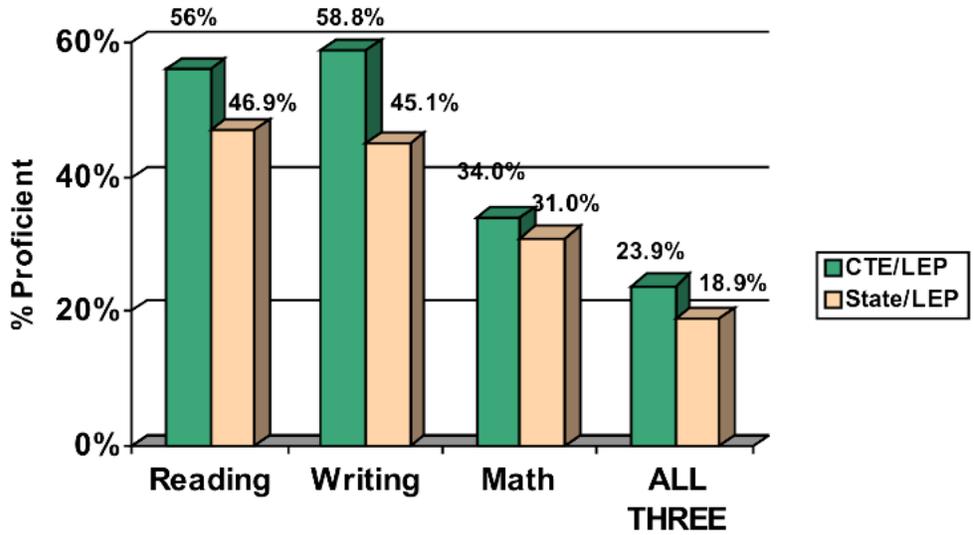
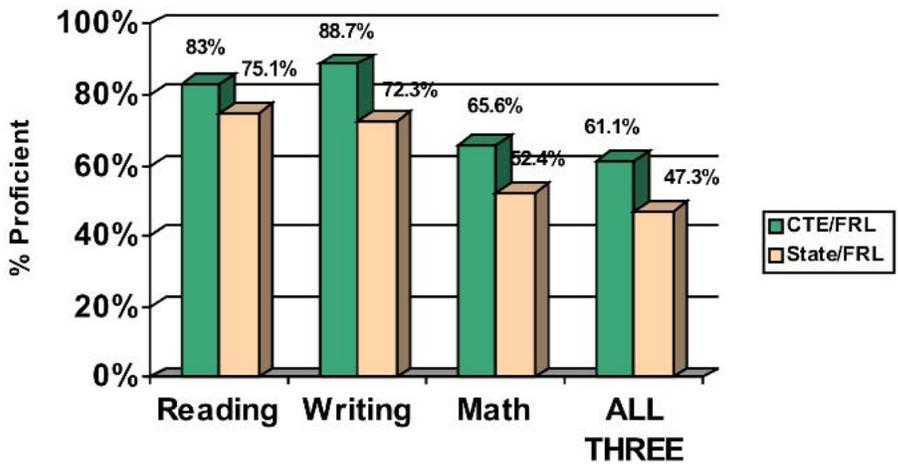


Figure 45 – Percent Proficiency of CTE students identified as FRL



The percentages of academically proficient CTE juniors who are economically disadvantaged (as identified by FRL status) or are identified as LEP are higher than state percentages in those groups for each of the three testing areas and for proficiency in all three areas. The differences are particularly impressive for IEP students.

Graduation, Dropout, and Other Outcome Indicators

Three outcome indicators have been identified as contributing to student success. These indicators are graduation rate, dropout rate, and completion indicators. Other student indicators include attendance rates, transiency rates, state assessment achievement results (as described above), and pre-college test results. Attendance rate data for Nevada's schools show that the state, as a whole, exceeded the pre-NCLB requirement of 90% previously in state law. In 2001-2002 the state attendance rate was 93% and in 2005-2006 it was 93.7%. The student population in Nevada is highly mobile, with a 33.5% transiency rate during the 2005-2006 school year.

Graduation Rates

The graduation rate published in the Nevada Report Card is a *student leaver graduation rate*. This rate is based on "leavers" (students who leave school as dropouts or graduates) and does not require the ability to track individual students over time. The calculation method is as follows: the number of standard, advanced, and adult diplomas divided by the number of standard, advanced, adult, and adjusted diplomas plus the number of certificates of attendance plus the number of dropouts from graduating class since entering ninth grade.

The National Governors' Association (NGA) Task Force on State High School Graduation Data is promoting a new way to calculate graduation rate that tracks individual students over time. In Nevada, this formula will be used for the graduating class of 2010. The calculation method (in 2009) is as follows: Students who graduate on-time divided by 9th grade enrollment in 2006 + students who transfer into system between 2006 & 2009 – students who transfer out of system between 2006 & 2009.

The graduation rate for Nevada in the 2004-2005 school year was 64.9%. As shown in Table 3 (below), the state graduation rate had been increasing until this last year. Last year's drop in rates can be partly explained by changes in the reporting criteria. There is significant variation in the districts' 2004-2005 graduation rates, with a median rate of 75%.

The breakdown of the graduation rates for major ethnic groups is available for the 2002-2003 through the 2004-2005 school years. The ethnic groups with the lowest graduation rates in 2004-2005 were Hispanic students at 50.7% (down from 52.6% in the previous year) and African American students at 49.7% (down from 50.5% in the previous year). The ethnic groups with the highest graduation rates were Asian students at 73.8% (slightly up from 73.4% in the previous year) and White students at 72.8% (down from 74.7% in the previous year). The American Indian students had a graduation rate of 55.8% (down from 58.2% in the previous year). Enhancements to the state accountability information system planned for the near future include data collection components that will address graduation and dropout rates for special education, Limited English Proficient, and free and/or reduced lunch status student populations.

Table 3: Six-Year Graduation Rate Percentages by State & School Districts

	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005
NEVADA	66.2	70.1	72.0	74.8	67.0	64.9
Carson City	84.6	84.8	91.9	84.4	81.8	86.2
Churchill	75.7	85.1	87.9	89.3	77.9	82.9
Clark	61.8	66.1	67.3	71.7	62.7	60.1
Douglas	83.7	87.0	92.4	90.9	93.2	85.4
Elko	81.6	82.0	84.8	78.7	70.1	80.3
Esmeralda	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Eureka	95.8	95.8	86.4	93.8	100	90
Humboldt	82.6	85.2	82.0	81.2	71.4	74.8
Lander	76.2	76.4	82.5	74.2	77.6	75.0
Lincoln	95.5	98.8	95.1	81.3	79.7	83.1
Lyon	83.5	83.8	86.4	83.1	76.4	83.1
Mineral	75.8	70.9	86.7	76.0	78.6	72.5
Nye	67.0	73.8	81.1	72.8	54.1	57.9
Pershing	93.2	93.6	88.3	95.6	87.7	88.5
Storey	71.4	65.9	76.7	70.8	50.0	55.3
Washoe	70.3	74.9	78.2	80.3	77.7	73.9
White Pine	59.7	66.5	61.1	81.4	74.7	72.7
State Charter						62.9

A different way of looking at high school completion is illustrated by *Achieve Inc.* According to the *Achieve, Inc.* 2006 review, of every 100 Nevada freshmen, 62 graduated on time, 27 immediately enrolled in a college or university, 18 were still enrolled in a college or university the next year, and 10 graduated from college or university within four years.

Dropout Rates

The dropout rate published in the Nevada Report Card is an *annual student dropout rate* and measures the percentage of students who dropout of high school in a given year. The calculation method is as follows: total drop outs plus total non-returns divided by total enrollment plus total non-returns, multiplied by one hundred. Although dropout rates are calculated independently of graduation rates, graduation rates do incorporate dropout data.

Over a six-year period (as shown in Table 4 below), from the 1999-2000 school year to the 2004-2005 school year, the Nevada high school dropout rate decreased slightly from 6.1% to 5.7%. A look at the major ethnic groups indicates that the American Indian dropout rate had a slight increase over this six-year period (with a slight decrease this year), having one of the highest rates (7.3%) of the subgroups (same as the African American rate) in 2004-2005. The African American and Hispanic dropout rates had a slight decrease over the six years, from 8.0% to 7.3% and from 9.2% to 7.8% respectively. The Hispanic dropout rate remains

the highest of the major ethnic groups. The Asian dropout rate is the lowest of the subgroups at 3.8%. The White dropout rate has fluctuated over the six years, holding steady at 4.5% the last two years. For the state rate and all subgroups (except Asian) the 2000-2001 dropout rates seem an anomaly with noticeable change from the year before and the year after.

Table 4: Six-Year Dropout Rate Percentages by State & School Districts

	Total '00	Total '01	Total '02	Total '03	Total '04	Total '05
NEVADA	6.1	5.0	6.3	6.0	5.8	5.7
Carson City	3.9	2.1	1.8	1.7	2.0	1.9
Churchill	2.0	2.1	1.9	2.6	3.3	1.8
Clark	6.9	5.7	7.8	7.6	7.2	7.1
Douglas	2.6	1.9	0.5	1.0	1.3	1.9
Elko	4.1	2.6	3.1	2.9	3.5	2.2
Eureka	0.0	2.9	2.1	0.0	0.0	-
Humboldt	2.6	3.2	5.0	5.4	4.0	4.6
Lander	3.4	2.4	1.1	1.1	3.6	2.3
Lincoln	0.4	8.0	4.4	0.7	0.7	0.3
Lyon	2.5	1.8	1.6	2.5	1.8	2.2
Mineral	6.6	3.7	1.8	0.0	3.2	4.1
Nye	4.3	7.2	3.6	5.0	5.0	9.3
Pershing	1.2	2.7	1.5	0.0	0.4	0.4
Storey	7.9	14.0	11.6	7.5	7.8	3.7
Washoe	5.5	4.3	3.4	3.7	2.7	2.0
White Pine	15.8	11.0	7.9	2.0	1.4	2.4
Charter	10.5	4.6	15.5	**	**	6.5

Student participation in Nevada’s Career and Technical Education programs has a dramatic effect on reducing high school dropout rates. Dropout data for CTE students is available for the 2004-2005 school year. The overall state dropout rate was 5.7% compared to the overall CTE student dropout rate of 1.6% and to a dropout rate for Southern Nevada Vocational Technical Center, of 0.8% percent. Further, dropout rates were dramatically lower for minority students enrolled in CTE courses in general and for minority high school students attending SNVTC. The dropout rates of 1.7% for African American CTE students compare well with the state average of 7.3% for African American students. Likewise, dropout rates for Hispanic CTE students (2.4%) are considerably lower than the state average rate for Hispanic students (7.8%).

Completion Indicators

The Nevada Report Card reports the number of students completing high school who receive standard diplomas, advanced diplomas, adjusted diplomas, adult diplomas, and certificates of attendance. Of the 20,391 Nevada seniors, 89% (18,242) received a diploma or certificate of attendance (down from the previous year’s 93%).

Results of Pre-College Tests

Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test (PSAT) Student Results. According to the PSAT report of results, of the 32,633 Nevada sophomores, 63% (20,509) took the PSAT in the 2005-2006 school year. Both Washoe County School District and Clark County School District provided the opportunity for all students to take the PSAT with resource and policy support, which explains the large number of students taking the PSAT. Of those who took the PSAT, the most represented major ethnic groups were White students at 46.9% (down from 49.8% in 2004-2005) and Hispanic students at 27.3% (up from 23.2% in 2004-2005). The average score for all tested was 38.1 in critical reading, 39.2 in math, and 40.8 in writing.

As entry tests for four year universities, the SAT and ACT are both taken in Nevada. Students take each test on a voluntary basis.

Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) Student Results. According to the SAT 2006 State Reports, 7,120 Nevada juniors and seniors took the SAT in the 2005-2006 school year. The most represented major ethnic groups were White students at 57% and Asian students at 13.8%. The average score for all tested was 498 in Critical Reading (compared to the national average of 503), 508 in Mathematics (compared to 518), and 481 in Writing (compared to 497). The highest for Critical Reading was the White average score (512); the lowest was the African American average score (446). The highest for Mathematics was the White average score (519); the lowest was the African American average score (439). When compared to the national averages, the Nevada African American and Hispanic average scores were higher than the national averages for those groups, while Nevada White and Asian students had lower average scores.

American College Tests (ACT) Student Results. According to the 2006 ACT High School Profile Report, the number of minority students taking the ACT and the average scores of those students are lower than those of white students (as shown in Table 5 below):

Table 5: Number, Percentage, and Score for ACT-Tested Graduates by Race/Ethnicity

	N	%	Average Composite Score
All Students	4,935	100	21.5
African American	244	5	17.9
American Indian/Alaskan Native	86	2	18.6
White	2,841	58	22.2
Hispanic	453	9	19.5
Asian American/Pacific Islander	360	7	22.1
Other/No Response	951	19	21.3

According to the same report, except for Asian American/Pacific Islander, the percent of students meeting the ACT College Readiness Benchmark Scores are lower for all other minority groups than for white students. ACT defines the College Readiness Benchmark Score as “the minimum score needed on an ACT subject-area test to indicate a 50% chance of obtaining a B or higher or about a 75% chance of obtaining a C or higher in the corresponding credit-bearing college courses.”

PRIORITY GOALS

From the data analysis and review of current status, it was concluded that a coordinated effort by all education partners is necessary to address the following priority goals.

GOAL 1: ALIGNMENT

Progress has been made in developing, sustaining, and/or enhancing the components of a comprehensive educational system that improves classroom instruction and student achievement. Specifically, actions to improve the components of the learning environment, improvement planning, interventions, high school reform, classroom (formative) assessments, and the data collection system have been targeted. However, disparities between ethnic groups in terms of test performance and graduation rates are pervasive and longstanding. Similar disparities are exhibited when the achievement trends of special populations (FRL, IEP, and LEP students) are compared with the trends of the state as a whole. With the identification of more and more schools being designated as In Need of Improvement, as well as the emergence of district- and state-sponsored charter schools, it is imperative that collaborative partnerships (state, regions, districts, schools, parents, and the community) focus on implementation and program evaluation in order to maximize use of limited human and fiscal resources. Therefore, a long range goal will be to **improve student performance through focused and unwavering collaboration with all key partners for a cohesive and aligned implementation of statewide improvement processes that drive all levels (school, district, and state) and increase student learning, effective teaching, and meaningful parental and community involvement.**

GOAL 2: DATA

Progress has been made in developing, sustaining, and/or enhancing the collection and use of consistent and relevant data at all levels to drive the improvement process. Specifically, extensive resources and time have been put into the development of a state level accountability information system that interfaces with district data systems and provides public reports of demographics and assessment results. However, continued efforts are necessary to ensure proper interpretation and use of data in order to evaluate implementation and outcomes. A full range of data sources (summative, formative, observations, etc) will need to be used to make accurate evaluations of the effectiveness of planned programs and strategies. Therefore, a long range goal will be to **improve instruction and learning through continued use of consistent and relevant data at all levels (student, classroom, school, district, and state) to support the improvement planning process, to evaluate the effectiveness of planned programs, and to drive instructional decisions focused on increased student achievement.**

GOAL 3: ACHIEVEMENT

Progress has been made in identifying research-based strategies to improve instruction in core academic subjects and the academic performance of all students. Specifically, schools and districts have provided access to professional learning community frameworks, intervention system models, “Model Schools” best practices, Assessment For Learning designs, and Career, Technical, and Education skills. However, the state must ensure that all students have access to a challenging and relevant standards-based general education. The implementation of innovative and/or proven practices needs to address the challenges of traditional structures, resource capacity, and the diversity of learners. Therefore, the long range goal will be to **improve the performance of all students through the implementation of proven practices that enhance instruction in core academic subjects (English/Language Arts, mathematics, science, and social studies) and reduce achievement gaps.**

GOAL 4: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Progress has been made in implementing a statewide approach to research-based professional development and educator pre-service preparation. Specifically, alignment of improvement plan goals to planned professional development activities is included in the improvement planning process, with high quality professional development criteria guiding the selection process. However, effective statewide professional development is necessary to provide coordination of efforts. Monitoring of professional development activities can ensure that identified needs are addressed, classroom instruction is impacted, and student learning increases. Therefore, the long range goal will be to **implement effective statewide professional development activities and educator pre-service preparation focused on data-driven needs and proven practices that will improve the learning of students as identified in school, district, and state improvement plans.**

GOAL 5: TARGETING IMPROVEMENT IN SECONDARY EDUCATION

Progress has been made in implementing a statewide initiative to focus on secondary education. Specifically, a statewide collaborative team developed a high school improvement blueprint that focuses improvement efforts on the value of the high school diploma and the redesign of high school structures and resources. The Governor and Legislature passed legislation that targeted funds for secondary education reform. High school outcome indicators are included in the advancements of the data accountability information system. However, disparities among ethnic groups (and between special populations and the general population) in terms of graduation rates, dropout rates, and post-secondary matriculation continue to exist. It is imperative that the leadership and support mechanisms (state, regions, districts, schools, parents, and the community) focus on implementation and program evaluation. Therefore, a long range goal will be to **improve student achievement in middle schools and high schools through the implementation of a statewide initiative that focuses on secondary education, including strategies to improve academic achievement, increase graduation rates, decrease dropout rates, improve distribution of information to the public, and increase post-secondary program enrollment and success rates.**

The action plan that follows identifies the strategies to accomplish the five goals.

STATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

ACTION PLAN

Goal #1: Alignment

To improve student performance through focused and unwavering collaboration with all key partners for a cohesive and aligned implementation of statewide improvement processes that drive all levels (school, district, and state) and increase student learning, effective teaching, and meaningful parental and community involvement.

2005 Strategies: Accomplishment Summaries

1. Implement a multilevel planning framework that defines the specific roles and structures at the state, district, and school levels to support actions related to the statewide improvement planning process; with components that ensure:

1a. School plans are explicitly based on needs identified in data to improve student learning and teaching.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

SB404: The Commission on Educational Excellence awarded a total of \$91,878,529.75 to 512 schools and 17 districts. The grants were distributed for an 18-month period, beginning January 2006 and ending June 30, 2007 with a larger amount distributed during the first year. The intent of the application process was that all approved applications be directly tied to data-driven needs in the School or District Improvement Plans.

Evaluation of School Improvement Plans: The Center for Performance Assessment has conducted an evaluation of the school improvement plans for the second year in Clark County School District. This evaluation looked at the quality of the plan with regard to measurable outcomes, ease of implementation, and monitoring of progress.

Peer Review Process: The Title I school districts have implemented a system of peer review of the School Improvement Plans of schools that are being served by Title I. The reviews ensure that the SIPs are related to the student needs identified by school data.

Legislative Committee on Education Interim Collaboration: Between legislative sessions the Legislative Committee on Education meets to receive information on educational needs and issues and develops proposals for the next convening of the Legislature. During 2005-2006 the LCE expressed significant interest in the 2005 State Improvement Plan and requested numerous presentations detailing the goals, actions and timelines of the plan. Many of the plan themes such as replicating best practices, increasing the rigor of high school, reducing the achievement gaps, increasing high school graduation rate while reducing dropouts, and improving data transfer between K-12 and Nevada System of Higher Education were acted upon through Bill Draft Requests and proposed appropriations for the 2007 Legislative Session.

ePAGE: electronic Plans, Applications, Grants and Expenditures (ePAGE) has been successfully launched with all districts having participated in orientation/training sessions, and the districts are using the system for most NCLB grant programs. NDE is currently incorporating several enhancements to the system to increase the user-friendly nature of the process. The ePAGE contains a planning component that requires the district to tie its fiscal planning to its overall goals in their improvement planning.

1b. District plans are driven by school needs; and the state plan is driven by district needs.

District Summaries: All seventeen school districts submitted District Improvement Plans in December 2005. More than half of the districts identified improvement needs for all students in ELA and Math. More than half of the districts identified improvement needs for IEP, LEP, and FRL students as well. The districts established goals related to instruction, data and assessment, and struggling students. The majority of the districts established a goal related to professional development. Actions in the District Improvement Plans reflected the needs in the School Improvement Plans.

1c. An expectation that improvement plans contain strategies to implement policies in the area of parental involvement and are in alignment with their Educational Involvement Accords.

Educational Involvement Accords: The Accord Advisory Committee, representing parents, districts, schools, and community members, assisted NDE in creating a form for Educational Involvement Accords as well as developing guidance regarding its implementation and distribution. Superintendent Keith Rheault presented the Accord to district superintendents. The Accord (in English and Spanish) has since been available to parents, schools, teachers, districts, and the community on the NDE website.

1d. The refinement of existing improvement planning processes at all levels.

SAGE Website: The SAGE Website Online School Improvement tool has been developed and will be piloted in the 2006-2007 school year by schools from rural and urban school districts. The Online tool guides school improvement teams through the development/revision of their school improvement plans. In addition, it provides for regular monitoring of the implementation of the plan and will include an end-of-year evaluation.

Northwest Accreditation & SAGE: The Nevada Department of Education provides a consultant to work with the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools (NAAS) as the Nevada Central Region chairperson. Additionally the Nevada State Accreditation Chair worked closely with the NDE School Improvement Office to ensure a clear link between the NAAS SIP and the SAGE process.

1e. Preparation for corrective actions and sanctions required by NCLB and state law.

Nevada Comprehensive Curriculum Alignment Tool (NCCAT): For districts and non-Title I schools In Need of Improvement Year 3, Nevada has several options for corrective action. One of these options is instituting and fully implementing a new curriculum that is based on state and local academic content and achievement standards, including providing appropriate professional development based on scientifically based research for all relevant staff, that offers substantial promise of improving educational achievement for low-performing students. The Nevada Department of Education developed the NCCAT which is a district/school self-analysis tool designed to help districts and schools determine where there are gaps in the areas of standards, assessment and instruction, and subsequently develop a plan of action for instituting and implementing a "new curriculum" and providing appropriate professional development.

In addition, the following accomplishments listed elsewhere in the Action Plan have provided guidance and/or structure for corrective actions and sanctions: ePAGE, School Support Teams, Nevada Report Card, Technical Advisory Councils.

2. In collaboration with all key partners:

2a. Identify the components that are critical to increasing student learning; AND

2b. Work together to bring about a uniform statewide vision for educational improvement and to foster a supporting culture.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

State Board Curriculum Task Force: The State Board of Education put in place a Task Force to look into the status of the alignment of Curriculum to State Standards. The Task Force presented five recommendations for improved alignment of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to State Standards (see Appendix C).

SB404: Through the evaluation of the programs and practices being implemented at schools and districts, components are identified that contribute to the increase in student learning.

SAGE School Improvement Process: The majority of the districts in the state have incorporated the SAGE Process as the structure for school improvement planning. The SAGE process underwent a revision of the data analysis guidance to include a focus on balanced assessment and intervention systems. The SAGE Process is currently undergoing a more extensive enhancement in order to provide support and guidance within the implementation monitoring and evaluation phases of the improvement cycle.

School Improvement for At-Risk Student Groups: Through the ongoing school improvement process, all state and federal programs that address the needs of the at-risk student populations have incorporated and prioritized strategies to increase student achievement. Improvements in data collection systems ensure effective and accurate monitoring of the impact of strategies on student outcomes (i.e. student achievement, graduation rate, dropout rate, post secondary outcomes).

2c. Expand relationships with parent and community groups throughout the state; AND

2d. Expand methods to communicate new initiatives clearly and regularly to parents and all the collaborative partners.

State and District Parent Involvement Resources and Activities: State and federal programs and resources incorporate parent involvement as a key element to the school improvement process and student success.

Parent and Community Collaborations: The state collaborates with parent groups (such as the Parent Teacher Association) in their efforts to lead, train, and encourage parents, teachers and the community to advocate for the education, health, and welfare of students and families. The state collaborates with community groups (such as the Education Collaborative) in their efforts to coordinate education and business needs.

Parent Involvement Summit: Nevada's First Parent Involvement Summit was conducted March 2006. Approximately 165 parents, teachers, superintendents, principals, trustees, legislators, and NDE personnel who represented 16 of the 17 school districts explored current research on the involvement of parents as contributors to increasing student achievement. During the final "Planning for the Future" session, participants determined that regional or district summits should be conducted and a follow-up parent involvement committee should meet to continue the parent involvement / student achievement dialogue and efforts.

High School Summit: The second annual Nevada High School Improvement Summit took place September 2006. The purpose of the summit was to update the status of high school improvement activities in the state and to plan for future activities. There was a broad representation of state-level and local-level educators, key legislators and staff, business and economic development leaders, post secondary education leadership, parent representatives and P-16 Council members.

Nevada Report Card Website: The Nevada Report Card website has been enhanced to incorporate information about schools that is useful for both school improvement and accountability. The Nevada Report Card (<http://nevadareportcard.com>) is an online accountability report on every school and district in Nevada. It is released to the public each year on August 15 and it has been recognized by the Federal Government as one of the most comprehensive report cards in the country.

3. Review allocated fiscal resources as part of the improvement planning process to determine the need for the reallocation of these resources and the need for additional resources. Review statutes and seek statutory change, if necessary.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

SAGE School Improvement Planning Fiscal Focus: All school and district improvement plans include a spending plan required by NRS 385 to illustrate the alignment of the school and district fiscal resources and the improvement goals.

ACR 10 Study: The 2005 Legislature, through the passage of A.C.R. 10, called for an interim study on the adequacy of the system of school finance in Nevada. The legislation required that a qualified, independent, nationally recognized consultant conduct the study. The Legislative Committee on School Financing Adequacy selected Augenblick, Palaich and Associates, Inc. to conduct the study. The report of this comprehensive study was presented to the Committee August 24, 2006. The Committee voted to send the full report the 2007 Legislative Session for their consideration and potential action.

ePAGE: electronic Plans, Applications, Grants and Expenditures (ePAGE) has been successfully launched with all districts having participated in orientation/training sessions, and the districts are using the system for most NCLB grant programs. NDE is currently incorporating several enhancements to the system to increase the user-friendly nature of the process.

SB404: The Commission on Educational Excellence awarded a total of \$91,878,529.75 to 512 schools and 17 districts. The grants were distributed for an 18-month period, beginning January 2006 and ending June 30, 2007 with a larger amount distributed during the first year.

4. Monitor the effectiveness of the technical advisory committees to tie the improvement of career and technical education programs to overall school-improvement (district-wide) strategies.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

Technical Advisory Committees: Recent legislation has broadened previous requirements that school districts establish and maintain technical advisory committees whereby each school district now maintains an advisory committee that meets at least three times per year. Strategies are in place for ensuring the advisory committees are actively engaged in the school-improvement process.

2006 ACTION PLAN	RESPONSIBLE PARTIES	DATA SOURCES
<p>GOAL #1 STRATEGIES: Based upon review of the data updates and the accomplishments of the 2005 strategies, the following represent the strategies for the 2006 State Improvement Plan Action Plan.</p>		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement a multilevel continuous improvement framework that defines the specific roles and structures at the state, district, and school levels to support actions related to the statewide improvement planning process; with components that ensure: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. An expectation that improvement plans contain strategies to implement policies in the area of parental involvement. 	NDE, RPDs, Regional Labs, Universities, Districts, Schools	SIPs, DIPs, STIP, Title III report, Special Education Indicators, SST reports, School Improvement training evaluations, Parent Summit Report

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. The refinement of existing improvement planning processes at all levels. c. Support for the implementation of school improvement actions required by state and federal law and regulations. 		
<p>2. Continue to review, as part of the improvement planning process, the need for the reallocation or procurement of resources.</p>	<p>Schools, Districts, NDE, ACR 10 Committee</p>	<p>SIPs, DIPs, STIP, SB404 Evaluation, State, district, and school grant procurement, Legislative CTE subcommittee report, ACR 10 report, iNVEST Plan</p>
<p>3. Continue to collaborate in the review and revision of state standards and with school districts in the alignment of curriculum and policy to state standards.</p>	<p>NDE, State Advisory Groups, Council to Establish Academic Standards in Public Schools</p>	<p>State Standards Guides, Curriculum Alignment audits, NV Report Card</p>
<p>4. Monitor the effectiveness of the technical advisory committees in their engagement in the school-improvement process as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that each local improvement plan has effect strategies for the improvement of career and technical education programs as a key component of their respective overall school-improvement strategies. - Ensure that each technical advisory committee is properly formed, managed and understands their role in the school-improvement process. - Ensure each technical advisory committee participates in the development of program-improvement strategies for career and technical education and that the identified strategies become part of the school districts' overall school-improvement plan. 	<p>NDE</p>	<p>CTE documentation</p>
<p>5. Establish a diversity advisory committee for the purpose of facilitating communication about strategies for improvement of instruction for culturally diverse students in order to increase achievement.</p>	<p>State Board, NDE</p>	<p>TBD</p>
<p>6. Recommend review of the governance structure of public education (K-12).</p>	<p>State Board, NDE</p>	<p>TBD</p>

Goal #2: Data

To improve instruction and learning through continued use of consistent and relevant data at all levels (student, classroom, school, district, and state) to support the improvement planning process, to evaluate the effectiveness of planned programs, and to drive instructional decisions focused on increased student achievement.

2005 Strategies: Accomplishment Summaries

1. Enhance methods for data collection and delivery in order to:

- Interface other data systems with PreK-12 student performance data systems.
- Verify that consistent and relevant data are maintained at all levels.
- Track academic student progress over time.
- Expand and sustain student performance data delivery at all levels (school, district, state).

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

EDEN: Data and tools developed for the Accountability Report Card will bring the state into compliance with EDEN (a federally required data warehouse). EDEN data files are being produced from existing ARC data and there are plans to create space within ARC to collect EDEN data from offices outside of the Office of Assessment, Program Accountability, and Curriculum.

Special Education Data System: Data collection and dissemination mechanisms have been developed to improve achievement and outcomes of students with disabilities.

2. Guide the provision of consistent systemic professional development for data analysis and interpretation in order to support improvement planning.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

School Improvement Training: The NDE and a number of the RPDPs have collaborated to provide professional development and technical assistance in data analysis and interpretation. The training has focused increasing the ability of administrators in the utilization and communication of data for improvement purposes.

3. Support development of the comprehensive state assessment system to include classroom-based assessments and other forms of local assessment to meet the needs of schools and districts.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

Balanced Assessment Programs: Many districts have ensured the provision of professional development to school staffs to write common classroom assessments to determine if students have learned information already taught in order to provide further time and support to students not demonstrating proficiency on standards. Some districts have begun to make school staffs aware of the principles of "assessment for learning" which involves constructing assessments using methods that are best for the learning targets being assessed daily, in order to yield accurate information about student learning needs, adjust instruction and promote student learning during the learning process.

<p align="center">2006 ACTION PLAN</p> <p>GOAL #2 STRATEGIES: Based upon review of the data updates and the accomplishments of the 2005 strategies, the following represent the strategies for the 2006 State Improvement Plan Action Plan.</p>	<p align="center">RESPONSIBLE PARTIES</p>	<p align="center">DATA SOURCES</p>
<p>1. Enhance methods for data collection and delivery in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interface other data systems with PreK-12 student performance data systems. - Verify that consistent and relevant data is maintained at all levels. - Track academic student progress over time. - Expand and sustain student performance data delivery at all levels (school, district, state). 	<p>NDE, Schools, Districts, DoIT</p>	<p>SAIN, ARC, Teacher Licensure, EDEN</p>
<p>2. Guide the provision of consistent systemic professional development for data analysis and interpretation that supports improvement planning.</p>	<p>NDE, RPDPs, Districts</p>	<p>District Reports</p>
<p>3. Support development of the comprehensive state assessment system to include classroom-based assessments and other forms of local assessment to meet the needs of schools and districts.</p>	<p>NDE, Schools, Districts</p>	<p>State Assessments, Local Assessments, Research Literature on Best Practices</p>
<p>4. Enhance methods for data collection and delivery to meet additional data requirements (English Language Proficiency Assessment, Nevada Alternate Scales of Academic Achievement, Special Education Performance Indicators) that are beyond the scope of the current student performance data system.</p>	<p>NDE, Districts, Schools</p>	<p>State Performance Plan, ELPA</p>

Goal #3: Achievement

To improve the performance of all students through the implementation of proven practices that enhance instruction in core academic subjects (English/Language Arts, mathematics, science, and social studies) and reduce achievement gaps.

2005 Strategies: Accomplishment Summaries

1. Provide guidance and support for the implementation of proven practices that improve the performance of students in English/Language Arts, math, science, and social studies, especially those strategies that improve the performance of students with disabilities, Limited English Proficient students, culturally diverse students, economically disadvantaged students, and other at-risk student populations, such as migrant and/or transient students.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

Reading and Mathematics CRT Instructional Materials: The NDE in collaboration with WestEd has designed instructional materials to aid teachers and students in understanding the design of the Nevada Proficiency Examination Program. These materials were developed for grades 3 – 8 in both reading and math.

Response To Instruction (RTI): The NDE is collaborating with the Instructional Consultation Lab to support the development of Intervention Systems in pilot schools across Nevada. A multi-tiered approach is used for intervention, wherein different levels of intervention are provided at different tiers, based on intensity and duration of the instructional intervention needed and the identified needs of the student.

Project IMPROVE: In June 2006, nineteen Project IMPROVE schools completed two-year grants as part of the Nevada Department of Education's State Improvement Grant. These schools received funding to plan for and provide professional development that supported the implementation of their school improvement plans. Professional development was designed to support staff capacity to provide effective instruction for students who were struggling, with a particular focus on increasing achievement for students with disabilities. In the spring of 2006, a new round of schools began a statewide pilot project with a focus on developing and implementing intervention systems that rely upon instructional consultation as the primary methodology for realizing improvement in student achievement.

Advanced Placement (AP) Incentive Program: The Nevada Advanced Placement Incentive Program provided grant awards to increase the successful participation of low-income students in Pre-advanced Placement and Advanced Placement courses and tests. By supporting this endeavor, the program provides greater opportunities for low-income students to achieve higher standards in English, mathematics, science, and other core subjects at the middle and high school levels.

Advanced Placement Expansion: Nevada applied for and received the National Governor's Association grant, *Strategy 2: Expand Advanced Placement Preparation*. This grant has provided funding to five Nevada high schools to expand their Advanced Placement programs that focus specifically on student populations that are underrepresented in Advanced Placement classes and exams.

Strategies for At-Risk Student Populations: SIOP, GLAD, AVID, GEAR UP, and other programs designed to meet the needs of English Language Learners have been implemented statewide. While there has been significant training in the larger districts the smaller ones are in need of more support. Training has occurred and the focus is now on implementation. Seven of the larger districts are required to submit ESL Improvement Plans by December 15, 2006. These plans will be reviewed for effective training and strong implementation.

Northeastern Nevada Math Project: The goal of this project is to improve both content and pedagogical knowledge in order to increase student understanding, which will be reflected in a stronger performance on various assessments. This MSP grant began the summer of 2005 with one week courses in Elko, Winnemucca,

and Ely and then followed-up with six one day sessions at each sight during the school year. The program will follow that format for two more years. The first year the focus was on basic operations with whole numbers. This year's focus is on the use and understanding of fractions.

Increased visibility of social studies programs in Nevada: Several tasks have been completed to bring social studies education to the forefront in Nevada. First, a State Social Studies Committee was established made up of educators from 12 districts around the state. These educators met for the first time in June 2006 to discuss the state of social studies in Nevada. It was agreed by all that increased visibility would be possible through the development of a website, more professional development opportunities, and with the establishment of the committee.

Social Studies Website: A social studies website was developed and may be accessed at the Nevada Department of Education website. This site provides teachers, as well as other persons working in the field of social studies education, with a wealth of information regarding social studies in Nevada and across the nation. This website includes: Monthly newsletters, Constitution Day web resources & information, NVHD Day web resources & information, Professional Resources, Comprehensive listing of professional development opportunities, and a teacher discussion board to share ideas and best practices in teaching.

Reading First: During the 2005-06 school year, Reading First served 30 elementary schools in seven districts in Nevada. Subgrants were awarded to districts to establish comprehensive reading programs in kindergarten through third grade, including a core reading program, supplemental reading materials, and intervention programs for struggling readers. Reading First also established an assessment program for kindergarten through third grade teachers to identify struggling readers, monitor the progress of all students throughout the year, and evaluate program effectiveness at the end of the year through. Each Nevada Reading First school employs at least one reading coach who provides professional development and supports teachers as they implement the comprehensive reading programs and use assessment data to inform reading instruction.

2. Monitor the effectiveness of current practices being used to improve the performance of students in English/Language Arts, math, and science, especially those targeted for students with disabilities, Limited English Proficient students, culturally diverse students, economically disadvantaged students, and other at-risk student populations, such as migrant and/or transient students.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

District Interim Assessments: In the 2006 District Improvement Plans, eleven districts identified an action step for the development or expansion of their assessment system to include interim assessments. These interim assessments provide benchmark data for use at the classroom level. Teacher planning time is used for teachers to meet and review the data in order to plan instruction and intervention based on student learning needs.

School Support Teams: A portion of the Title I school improvement funds were provided to hire a qualified and trained educator to lead the School Support Team in its work with Title I schools. The schools with School Support Team Leaders who provided mentorship and guidance showed progress in successfully implementing their School Improvement Plans and in increasing student learning.

Special Education Progress Monitoring: The progress monitoring system for special education programs has been revised to align compliance monitoring with school improvement.

3. Provide guidance and support for the implementation of proven practices being used at high performing schools in Nevada by:
 - Enhancing coordination with nationally recognized successful schools and districts in order to replicate successful practices.

- Using established criteria to identify the factors that specifically impact results in high achieving and exemplary schools that are showing extraordinary growth with all student populations.
- Creating a mechanism that allows high performing Nevada schools to be a resource to struggling schools and districts to help replicate successful practices.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

School Recognition: The Exemplary, High Achieving, Title I Distinguished, and Mega Highlighted Schools were honored through various activities, including the 2006 NDE Mega Conference, the national Title I Conference, and other national events. At the 2006 NDE Mega Conference, the Highlighted Schools presented during sessions focused on best practices for raising student achievement.

STARS Turn-Around High Schools: Using funds from the National Governor's Association grant, ten successful Nevada high schools have become part of the International Center for Leadership in Education (ICLE) Successful Practices Network and received professional development on the best practices used in the model schools. These successful Nevada high schools will mentor low-performing Nevada high schools to help these schools implement effective improvement practices.

4. Provide guidance and support for the implementation of strategies that increase the graduation rate, decrease the dropout rate, and manage discipline effectively.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

Strategies for At-Risk Student Populations: SIOP, GLAD, AVID, GEAR UP, and other programs designed to meet the needs of English Language Learners have been implemented statewide. While there has been significant training in the larger districts the smaller ones are in need of more support. Training has occurred and the focus is now on implementation. Seven of the larger districts are required to submit ESL Improvement Plans by December 15, 2006. These plans will be reviewed for effective training and strong implementation.

School Improvement for At-Risk Student Groups: Through the ongoing school improvement process, all state and federal programs that address the needs of the at-risk student populations have incorporated and prioritized strategies to increase student achievement. Improvements in data collection systems ensure effective and accurate monitoring of the impact of strategies on student outcomes (i.e. student achievement, graduation rate, dropout rate, post secondary outcomes).

The Guinn Millennium Scholarship Program: The Guinn Millennium Scholarship Program has provided funding to allow Nevada's students to continue their education beyond high school. During the spring semester 2005, 14,577 students were enrolled in Nevada institutions of higher education and were receiving Millennium funds. Of those students, 67% were attending the University of Nevada, Reno or the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Administrator Workshops: NASA conducted workshops that focused on a number of critical topics for administrators, including a school law workshop that provided participants with the necessary information to handle discipline effectively and in accordance with the law.

5. Provide guidance and support for the implementation of strategies to integrate technology into instructional planning and delivery in coordination with the Commission on Educational Technology.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

Technology Integration: The Commission on Educational Technology reviewed and approved state technology implementation funding for school districts to improve student academic achievement through the use of effective integration of technology resources and systems.

6. Work in conjunction with the Council to Establish Academic Standards in Public Schools in its review of academic standards as prescribed in statute.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

Academic Standards Revision: The content and achievement standards in mathematics were revised by a committee of teachers, parents, university faculty, and administrators and were approved by the Council in March 2006. They will be reviewed and adopted by the State Board in December 2006. The English/Language Arts standards are undergoing revision and will be completed in the 2006-2007 school year.

<p align="center">2006 ACTION PLAN</p> <p>GOAL #3 STRATEGIES: Based upon review of the data updates and the accomplishments of the 2005 strategies, the following represent the strategies for the 2006 State Improvement Plan Action Plan.</p>	<p align="center">RESPONSIBLE PARTIES</p>	<p align="center">DATA SOURCES</p>
<p>1. a) Continue to support the implementation of proven practices that improve the performance of students in English/Language Arts, math, science, and social studies.</p> <p>b) Expand support for the implementation of proven practices that improve the performance of students with disabilities, Limited English Proficient students, culturally diverse students, economically disadvantaged students, and other at-risk student populations, such as migrant and/or transient students.</p> <p>c) Continue to support the implementation of strategies to integrate technology into instruction and formative assessment use.</p>	<p>NDE, RPDPs, Districts, Schools</p>	<p>SIPs, DIPs, Mega Conference Evaluations, SB404 Evaluation, School Improvement Training Evaluations, AMAO Report, Special Education Indicators, NV Report Card</p>
<p>2. Develop and implement the mechanisms to monitor the effectiveness of current practices and programs that impact the performance of students in English/Language Arts, math, and science, especially those targeted for students with disabilities, Limited English Proficient students, culturally diverse students, economically disadvantaged students, and other at-risk student populations, such as migrant and/or transient students.</p>	<p>NDE, Districts, Schools</p>	<p>Monitoring Frameworks, Data produced by Monitoring Frameworks, AMAO Report, NV Report Card, Special Education Indicators</p>
<p>3. Continue to support the implementation of proven practices being used at high performing schools in Nevada by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhancing coordination with nationally recognized successful schools and districts in order to replicate successful practices. 	<p>NDE, Districts, National partners</p>	<p>Mega Highlighting Schools Interview Results, Title I Distinguished Schools Interviews Results, NV Report Card, AYP</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using established criteria to identify the factors that specifically impact results in high achieving and exemplary schools that are showing extraordinary growth with all student populations. - Creating a mechanism that allows high performing Nevada schools to be a resource to struggling schools and districts to help replicate successful practices. 		Designation Results
<p>4. Conduct a review of School and District Improvement Plans to identify best practice strategies that increase the graduation rate and decrease the dropout rate.</p>	NDE, Districts, Schools	NV Report Card, SIPs, DIPs, Special Education Indicators, CTE Program Results, AYP Results
<p>5. Continue to support professional development for district and site leadership in school culture and learning environment best practices that manage discipline effectively.</p>	NDE, Districts, Schools	NV Report Card, SIPs, DIPs, Persistently Dangerous Schools Report
<p>6. Initiate network of cultural diversity leaders to exchange information on methodologies to improve the achievement of diverse students and institute recommendations for best practices statewide.</p>	NDE, Clark County Diversity Education Leadership and other school district diversity leadership, Institutions of Higher Education	Diversity practices documentation

Goal #4: Professional Development

To implement effective statewide professional development activities and educator pre-service preparation focused on data-driven needs and proven practices that will improve the learning of students as identified in school, district, and state improvement plans.

2005 Strategies: Accomplishment Summaries

1. Joint planning with institutions of higher education to ensure that pre-service teachers receive coursework that focuses on improved student performance in a standards-based system, with attention to special population and diversity students; AND
2. Investigate the feasibility of a statewide review of professional development practices.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

Teaching Quality Task Force (TQTF): Representatives from the state, institutions of higher education, school districts, and RPDPs have collaborated to align the systems of pre-service, licensure, and professional development for re-licensure. The TQTF has identified the needs of each system and reviewed best practices literature (theory and research) to investigate ways in which NV can move toward improved coordination among these separate systems to produce and support highly effective instruction for diverse learners.

3. Support and participate in effective statewide professional development activities that coordinate the professional development efforts of all entities to ensure that there is alignment in the school and district improvement process between standards, learning targets, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and sustained, intensive, job-embedded professional development – with specific attention to student populations that are low performing, such as IEP and LEP student groups. Entities include: institutions of higher education, state department, state board of education, the state education commissions, RPDP, district leadership, schools, and local and state professional associations.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

State Board Curriculum Alignment Task Force: Members of the State Board of Education Curriculum Alignment Task Force to investigate the status of the alignment of Curriculum to State Standards. The Task Force conducted a survey of the seventeen school districts. With respect to professional development, all seventeen districts responded that their professional development supported standards based instruction. Methodologies such as district staff review and approval of coursework; electronic registration and tracking data systems; new teacher academies and induction programs; professional development plans driven from district and school improvement plans; and utilization of Nevada Professional Development Standards (see Appendix F) were referenced by the Districts. Fifteen of the seventeen districts stated that their RPDP provided training and support for standards based instruction.

State, Region, and District professional development activities: Ongoing professional development activities on standards-based instruction have been completed. These professional development activities have served a variety of needs, including the expansion of support services, content and instruction best practices, assessment strategies, and school improvement.

Science and Mathematics Standards Update Workshops: With the revision of the Nevada State Content Standards in Science and Mathematics completed, the NDE is offering workshops for district and regional professional development personnel to examine these documents. The NDE Science and Math content specialists will be discussing the revisions in terms of implementation of the standards and impact to instruction and testing.

National History Day: To expand professional development opportunities for social studies in the state a plan was created to revive National History Day, an invaluable history education program. To promote the National History Day in Nevada program, the following have been accomplished: Created a Student/Teacher Curriculum Guide for High School and Elementary levels and established a cohort of teachers to train and support Nevada National History Day.

School improvement trainings in collaboration with RPDPs: The NDE provided its annual school improvement training with a focus on the components of the SAGE continuous improvement cycle. The NDE has collaborated with several of the Regional Professional Development Programs to provide additional school improvement training targeting the needs of the administrators in leading schools through the improvement process.

Mega Conference: The NDE partnered with the International Center for Leadership in Education to conduct the State's annual training conference focusing on best practices in model schools. Representatives from schools around the nation, as well as highlighted Nevada schools, shared successful practices that have improved instruction and increased student achievement. Over 500 educators, including 39 school teams, attended the conference.

Northeastern Nevada Math Project: The goal of this project is to improve both content and pedagogical knowledge in order to increase student understanding, which will be reflected in a stronger performance on various assessments. This MSP grant began the summer of 2005 with one week courses in Elko, Winnemucca, and Ely and then followed-up with six one day sessions at each sight during the school year. The program will follow that format for two more years. The first year the focus was on basic operations with whole numbers. This year's focus is upon the use and understanding of fractions.

RTI pilot: Twelve districts are participating in Intervention Systems change initiative to develop intervention systems that support four essential components: data-based decision making; collaborative problem solving, monitoring for progress (a.k.a. Assessment for Learning), and interventions. Training is provided throughout the pilot to ensure full implementation of the intervention system.

Professional Learning Community Administrator Online Forum: There were 52 participants in the forum as of April 2006. A survey in April revealed that 21 of the 25 respondents gained new knowledge and skills in implementing PLCs and 11 out of the 25 respondents said their new knowledge and skills transferred to teachers. Dr. Stiggins' information on assessment literacy was especially helpful. Information is currently being shared on the process of change and the new "Learning by Doing" handbook information to ensure PLC implementation for continuous improvement/student achievement.

Administrator Workshops: NASA conducted workshops that focused on a number of critical topics for administrators, including workshops that provided participants with the necessary information about best practices for increasing student achievement, leadership styles, school reform and change.

4. Review administrative licensure requirements and recertification requirements to ensure that Nevada has well-defined leadership standards in place for what administrators should know and be able to do. Define these standards for administrators as the Nevada Leadership Standards. Recommend that standards specifically address the issue of supporting and retaining quality teachers. Suggest the Nevada Leadership Standards represent the projected revision of Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Standards and recent research by McREL's team of Waters and Marzano that identified the characteristics of principals that are tied to student achievement.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

The Commission on Professional Standards considered a request to revisit this, but currently there are no plans to further review administrative licensure requirements and recertification requirements in terms of leadership standards.

<p align="center">2006 ACTION PLAN</p> <p>GOAL #4 STRATEGIES: Based upon review of the data updates and the accomplishments of the 2005 strategies, the following represent the strategies for the 2006 State Improvement Plan Action Plan.</p>	<p align="center">RESPONSIBLE PARTIES</p>	<p align="center">DATA SOURCES</p>
<p>1. Continue statewide collaboration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Through the work of the Teacher Quality Taskforce, to continue planning with institutions of higher education, districts, and RPDPs to align statewide professional development practices (preservice, licensure, and relicensure). - For a statewide standards-based system of professional development in districts and regional professional development programs. 	<p>NDE, Institutes of High Education, districts, RPDPs</p>	<p>Teacher Quality Taskforce Database</p>
<p>2. Continue to support and participate in professional development activities (based on Nevada PD standards) that align with school and district improvement efforts.</p>	<p>NDE, Institutes of Higher Education, RPDPs, Districts, Schools, National partners</p>	<p>SIPs, DIPs, STIP, RPDPs Evaluation report, IHE data</p>
<p>3. Continue to support professional development (based on Nevada PD standards) for administrators that focuses on best practices for supporting and retaining quality teachers.</p>	<p>NDE, Districts, RPDPs, NASA</p>	<p>RPDP evaluations, NASA reports, District reports</p>
<p>4. Determine the feasibility of a professional development database by conducting a pilot database that focuses on the collection and reporting of the professional development provided to administrators.</p>	<p>NDE, RPDPs</p>	<p>Results of Pilot</p>

Goal #5: Targeting Improvements in Secondary Education

To improve student achievement in middle schools and high schools through the implementation of a statewide initiative that focuses on secondary education, including strategies to improve academic achievement, increase graduation rates, decrease dropout rates, improve distribution of information to the public, and increase post-secondary program enrollment and success rates.

2005 Strategies: Accomplishment Summaries

Strategies 1-5 are from *STARS: Nevada's Blueprint for High School Improvement*

1. Priority Goals for Value of Diploma:

- Develop methods of better meeting the needs of low-performing student populations and of ensuring that special education and LEP student populations have access to rigorous and relevant curriculum.
- Increase the graduation rate and decrease the dropout rate in high schools, with special attention to low-performing student populations.
- Identify mechanisms that will help students value and act upon accessing rigorous and relevant high school courses.

Long range goals:

- Engage key collaborative partners in a review of the value of the current standard high school diploma and address methods to define and add rigor and relevance while expanding availability of alternate completion options.
- Increase the percentage of high school students that improve in reading, English, mathematics and science.
-

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

Gateway Curriculum (Washoe): A small number of districts are beginning to explore and implement a framework for rigorous high school course-taking, such as Gateway Curriculum adopted by the Washoe County School District. The WCSD Gateway Course of Study is a series of high school classes in which all high school students will be automatically enrolled, beginning in fall 2006 with incoming ninth graders. The support for increased rigor and relevance includes, but is not limited to, the results from WCSD participation in the American Diploma Project, research from the Education Trust and the Nevada System of Higher Education Task Force on Remedial and Developmental Education, partnership with the Education Collaborative of Washoe County, Inc., and feedback from local employers. The 2005-06 timeline of major activities conducted in the development of the Gateway Course of Study included data collection, teacher professional development design, and student and parent outreach.

National Governors Association Graduation Rate Initiative: Nevada is one of forty-nine states that has committed to the national effort of implementing a uniform calculation for graduation rates. Although similar to Nevada's current calculation of the graduation rate, the differences of the uniform calculation would likely benefit Nevada. Since this calculation requires unique student identifiers be in place for 9th graders, we anticipate the earliest full implementation would be the graduating class of 2010.

2. Priority Goals for Redesign:

- Adopt a framework for identification of successful high schools to serve as models and mentors for low-performing high schools.
- Incorporate innovate designs (i.e. graduation timing, structure of school, technology availability, enhanced senior year, scheduling, middle school design) in response to students' needs and increase the access to more traditional offerings.

Long range goal:

- Develop methods that identify and address obstacles to access for specific student populations to ensure access and opportunity to rigorous and relevant curriculum by all populations.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

STARS Turn-Around High Schools: The National Governor's Association grant, *Strategy 1: Turn Around Low-Performing Schools* has provided funding for ten successful Nevada high schools to become part of the ICLE Successful Practices Network. Ten Nevada high schools were selected in February 2006 to participate in a two-year process to help support school improvement efforts. The schools have participated in professional development including two trainings provided by ICLE: Success Practices Network Orientation and the Rigor and Relevance Framework. Schools have attended the Nevada Megaconference, 2006, the ICLE Models Schools Conference, 2006, written an Action Plan based on the ICLE Learning Criteria and a selected group of high schools partnered with a feeder middle school will attend the ICLE Reinvention Symposium this fall, 2006.

Legislative Subcommittee to Study the Effectiveness of Career and Technical High Schools: The Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education worked extensively with this legislative subcommittee providing data supportive of the role of CTE in improving both academic performance and occupational skills, lowering dropout rates, increasing graduation rates, and direct ties to postsecondary education and training. The subcommittee's report indicated that CTE courses are effective in educating students; CTE requires stable funding sources and increased revenues; additional CTE high schools are necessary to meet the needs of employers and the interests of students; articulated courses provided a means for high school students to start a college CTE major while in high school; guidance counselors are increasingly assigned to non-guidance duties; and schools and employers should make students and parents aware of skills needed to succeed in the 21st Century and increase opportunities available to students.

3. Priority Goals for Educators:

- Align professional development to instructional needs through data-driven decision making in order to impact instructional practices to increase student achievement.
- Increase the depth of knowledge and pedagogy in content reading and in math for all high school teachers.
- Expand incentives and support to teachers in order to better equalize the percent of highly qualified teachers in at risk high schools through expanded incentives and other means of support.
- Increase availability of training in appropriate instruction to diverse student populations in inclusive settings.

Long range goals:

- Develop strategies of analysis and feedback mechanisms that link educator evaluation, student performance, and professional development in order to guide instructional practices.
- Expand the system of professional development as a vehicle for carrying out the goals of the Blueprint.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

Teaching Quality Task Force (TQTF): Representatives from the state, institutions of higher education, school districts, and RPDs have collaborated to align the systems of pre-service, licensure, and professional development for re-licensure. The TQTF has identified the needs of each system and reviewed best practices literature (theory and research) to investigate ways in which NV can move toward improved coordination among these separate systems to produce and support highly effective instruction for diverse learners.

Professional Development in Data Use: Nevada applied for and received the National Governor's Association grant, *Strategy 3: Develop a Statewide Longitudinal K-16 Data System*. This grant has provided funding for training to increase the district and school leaders' knowledge and skills in making data-driven decisions that impact instructional practices and promotes the transfer of data between P-12 and higher education systems.

4. Priority Goals for Progress & Accountability:

- Enhance statewide data system to look at longitudinal growth at the individual level and school level over PreK-12 range and incorporate a 12th – 16th monitoring component.
- Enhance statewide data system to provide student data for formative and reporting purposes in order to share what works.

Long range goals:

- Enhance the statewide data system that monitors longitudinal growth at the student level and school level over P-12 range and incorporate a 12th-16th monitoring component.
- Enhance the statewide data system to make available necessary data to evaluate the effectiveness of the goals in Nevada's Blueprint and resulting improvement strategies for P-16 education.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

Longitudinal Data Systems: Nevada applied for and received the National Governor's Association grant, *Strategy 3: Develop a Statewide Longitudinal K-16 Data System*. This grant provides funding to study the most effective longitudinal data systems being used in other states.

5. Priority Goals for Education Governance:

- Develop and/or enhance, in coordination with key collaborative partners, communication mechanisms in order to make apparent and keep up-to-date with high school improvement efforts.

Long range goals:

- Expand mechanisms to make clear the requirements and expectations of post secondary options in order to obtain P-16 alignment with business and community expectations.
- Provide for ongoing dialogue between collaborative partners to carry out goals of Nevada's Blueprint.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

High School Summit: The second annual Nevada High School Improvement Summit took place September 2006. The purpose of the summit was to update the status of high school improvement activities in the state and to plan for future activities. There was a broad representation of state-level and local-level educators, key legislators and staff, business and economic development leaders, post secondary education leadership, parent representatives and P-16 Council members.

Parent Involvement Summit: Nevada's First Parent Involvement Summit was conducted March 2006. Over 165 parents, teachers, superintendents, principals, trustees, legislators, and NDE personnel who represented 16 of the 17 school districts explored current research on the involvement of parents as a contributor to increasing student achievement. During the final "Planning for the Future" session, participants determined that regional or district summits should be conducted and a follow-up parent involvement committee should meet to continue the parent involvement / student achievement dialogue and efforts.

6. Encourage student participation in secondary Career and Technical Education programs to heighten student appreciation of the relevance of high school education and to improve performance on proficiency examinations in core academic areas, increase graduation rate, and decrease dropout rate.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

As illustrated in this document, student participation in CTE programs is tied to higher academic proficiencies, higher graduation rates, and lower dropout rates.

Administrative Meetings & Professional Development: Administrators and teachers are exposed to the benefits of CTE participation for student academic and occupational achievement and to techniques for encouraging student enrollment in CTE programs

Funding Ties: Perkins funding ties to student enrollment in CTE courses encourages school districts to enroll students in CTE courses.

7. Ensure compliance with the requirements set forth in AB 580 to develop and implement a comprehensive system of technical advisory committees to ensure a strong community-based role in career and technical education programs.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

Overall School-Improvement Strategies: Monitored each local improvement plan for effective strategies for the improvement of career and technical education programs as a key component of their respective overall school-improvement strategies.

Technical Advisory Committee Operation: Monitored that each technical advisory committee was properly formed, managed, and understood their role in the school improvement process.

Participation in Development of Program-Improvement Strategies: Each technical advisory committee participated in the development of program-improvement strategies for career and technical education and that the identified strategies became part of the school districts' overall school-improvement plan.

8. Provide guidance and support in the implementation of proven practices to decrease the drop out rate by attending to the multiple factors that contribute to students not completing high school.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

STARS Turn-Around High Schools: Using funds from the National Governor's Association grant, ten successful Nevada high schools have become part of the ICLE Successful Practices Network. These successful Nevada high schools will mentor low-performing Nevada high schools to help these schools implement effective improvement practices.

GEAR UP: Nevada is in the process of ending the first GEAR UP grant. The current cohort of students is in the 12th grade and will graduate in 2007. A scholarship trust is available for GEAR UP students to attend Nevada System of Higher Education colleges and universities. A new grant application was written and approved by the United States Department of Education for \$18 million. The new grant will serve a cohort of students beginning in 7th grade, will focus on middle school improvement and will provide a scholarship trust for GEAR UP students who attend the Nevada System of Higher Education colleges and universities.

AVID: Clark County School District (CCSD) and Washoe County School District (WCSD) are at various stages of implementation of the Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID) program. CCSD has implemented AVID over the past three years in 23 high schools and one middle school. CCSD will implement AVID in eight middle schools during the next two school years. WCSD has one model AVID program at Sparks High School that was initiated in 2001-02. WCSD is implementing a new AVID program at Incline High School this school year.

9. Provide guidance and support in the expansion of adult (16-20 year olds) education opportunities.

ACCOMPLISHMENT SUMMARIES: THE GOAL AND STRATEGIES WERE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES.

Increased Collaboration: Increased collaboration between Adult Basic Education and Adult High School programs to increase access and expand educational opportunities to adult learners.

Access and Training: Provided access and training to CASAS assessment tools to all adult programs.

Primary Performance Indication: Placed an emphasis on enrollment in post-secondary education as a prime performance indicator.

Promotion of Innovative Educational Programs: Promoted Innovative Educational programs such as Independent Study and Distance Education to expand educational opportunities to adult learners.

<p align="center">2006 ACTION PLAN</p> <p>GOAL #5 STRATEGIES: Based upon review of the data updates and the accomplishments of the 2005 strategies, the following represent the strategies for the 2006 State Improvement Plan Action Plan.</p>	<p align="center">RESPONSIBLE PARTIES</p>	<p align="center">DATA SOURCES</p>
<p>Strategies 1-5 are from STARS: Nevada's Blueprint for High School Improvement</p> <p>1. Priority Goals for Value of Diploma:</p> <p>Implementation Goal 1: Develop <i>prevention and intervention</i> methods to better meet the needs of low-performing student populations and to ensure that <i>all students (including special education and Limited English Proficient student populations)</i> have access to rigorous and relevant curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide incentives for districts to implement a framework for rigorous high school course-taking for all students. - Support the expansion of rigorous high school course offerings for all students. - Support the utilization of counselors for the expansion of rigorous high school course offerings for all students. - Support training about rigorous high school curriculums (ICLE, Gateway Curriculum, RTI) for districts and schools. <p>Implementation Goal 2: Increase the graduation rate and decrease the dropout rate in high schools, with special attention to low-performing student populations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue the steps toward implementation of the uniform graduation rate calculation for Nevada. <p>Implementation Goal 3: Identify mechanisms that will help students value and act upon accessing rigorous and relevant high school courses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue the <i>Expand Advanced Placement Preparation</i> grant project. 	<p>NDE, Districts, Schools</p>	<p>NGA Evaluation Plan</p>

<p>2. Priority Goals for Redesign:</p> <p>Implementation Goal 1: Adopt a framework for identification of successful high schools to serve as models and mentors for low-performing high schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue the <i>Turn Around Low-Performing Schools</i> grant project. <p>Implementation Goal 2: Incorporate <i>research-based</i> innovative designs (e.g., graduation timing, structure of school, technology availability, enhanced senior year, scheduling, middle school design) in response to student needs and increase the access to more than traditional offerings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Evaluate the innovative programs, activities, and designs that are being implemented in high schools throughout the state. Use results of the Center for Performance Assessment evaluation of the Innovation and Prevention of Remediation Activities and/or Programs grants (SB404) to inform the process and communicate the results. - Develop quality criteria of innovations based on the effective practices in the state. Identify barriers that keep districts and schools from being able to fully implement effective innovations. - Develop quality criteria of counselors based on the National Standards of Counselors. Identify barriers that keep districts and schools from being able to fully support effective counselor best practices. - Support a statewide articulation of the importance/value of acquiring an education (with consideration of alignment issues such as a high school exit exam that serves as a college/university entrance exam; with consideration of alternatives such as practices and programs that assist students who struggle to pass the high school exit exams). <p>Implementation Goal 3: Create more business and technical training opportunities and expand dual credit offerings.</p>	<p>NDE, Districts, Schools</p>	<p>NGA Evaluation Plan</p>
<p>3. Priority Goals for Educators:</p> <p>Implementation Goal 1: Align <i>preservice and</i> professional development to instructional needs through data-driven decision making in order to impact instructional practices to increase student achievement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide resources to support the development of classroom-based formative assessments that provide immediate results reported in a disaggregated and itemized format. - Continue <i>Develop a Statewide Longitudinal K-16 Data System</i> grant project by providing training for district and school leaders in data analysis. 	<p>NDE, Districts, Schools</p>	<p>NGA Evaluation Plan</p>

<p>Implementation Goal 2: Increase the depth of knowledge and pedagogy in content reading and in math for all high school teachers.</p> <p>Implementation Goal 3: Expand incentives and support to teachers in order to better equalize the percent of highly qualified teachers in at risk high schools through expanded incentives and other means of support.</p> <p>Implementation Goal 4: Increase availability of training in appropriate instruction to diverse student populations in inclusive settings.</p>		
<p>4. Priority Goals for Progress & Accountability:</p> <p>Implementation Goal 1: Enhance the statewide data system to provide individual student performance data to inform instruction and to evaluate and share what works.</p> <p>Implementation Goal 2: Enhance the statewide data system to provide longitudinal data for students entering careers from the Nevada P-16 education system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue <i>Develop a Statewide Longitudinal K-16 Data System</i> grant project by providing training for district and school leaders in data analysis. - Work with the NSHE on data sharing and research to improve high school curriculum/course requirements to better prepare Nevada high school students for post secondary options. 	NDE, Districts, Schools	NGA Evaluation Plan
<p>5. Priority Goals for Education Governance:</p> <p>Implementation Goal 1: Develop and/or enhance, in coordination with key collaborative partners, communication mechanisms in order to make apparent and keep up-to-date with high school improvement efforts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue the annual <i>Nevada High School Improvement Summit</i>. - Continue collaboration with the P-16 council as the state education/business collaborative group. - Support the expansion of education/business collaboration groups at the district level. 	NDE, Districts, Schools	NGA Evaluation Plan
<p>6. Encourage student participation in secondary Career and Technical Education programs to heighten student appreciation of the relevance of high school education and to improve performance on proficiency examinations in core academic areas, increase graduation rate, and decrease dropout rate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue emphasis on benefits of CTE participation on student achievement and graduation in administrative meetings and professional development - Continue ties of funding with CTE enrollment 	NDE, Career and Technical Education Office, Districts	Occupational Reporting System

<p>7. Ensure compliance with the requirements set forth in AB 580 to develop and implement a comprehensive system of technical advisory committees to ensure a strong community-based role in career and technical education programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue emphasis on ties to overall school-improvement strategies and monitor Technical Advisory Committee operations, and encourage their participation in the development of program-improvement strategies. 	<p>NDE, Career and Technical Education Office, Districts</p>	<p>Occupational Reporting System</p>
<p>8. Provide guidance and support in the expansion of adult (16-20 year olds) education opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue cooperative efforts between Adult Basic Education and Adult High School programs, provide access and training in assessment programs, continued emphasis on enrollment in post-secondary education, and promote innovative educational programs. 	<p>NDE, Adult Education Office, Districts</p>	<p>Adult Accountability System</p>

APPENDIX A

Nevada Revised Statute: State Improvement Plan Requirements

Sec. 11. NRS 385.34691 is hereby amended to read as follows: 385.34691

1. The State Board shall prepare a plan to improve the achievement of pupils enrolled in the public schools in this State. The plan:

(a) Must be prepared in consultation with:

- (1) Employees of the Department;
- (2) At least one employee of a school district in a county whose population is 100,000 or more, appointed by the Nevada Association of School Boards;
- (3) At least one employee of a school district in a county whose population is less than 100,000, appointed by the Nevada Association of School Boards; and
- (4) At least one representative of the Statewide Council for the Coordination of the Regional Training Programs created by NRS 391.516, appointed by the Council; and

(b) May be prepared in consultation with:

- (1) Representatives of institutions of higher education;
- (2) Representatives of regional educational laboratories;
- (3) Representatives of outside consultant groups;
- (4) Representatives of the regional training programs for the professional development of teachers and administrators established pursuant to NRS 391.512;
- (5) The Bureau; and
- (6) Other persons who the State Board determines are appropriate.

2. A plan to improve the achievement of pupils enrolled in public schools in this State must include:

(a) A review and analysis of the data upon which the report required pursuant to NRS 385.3469 is based and a review and analysis of any data that is more recent than the data upon which the report is based.

(b) The identification of any problems or factors common among the school districts or charter schools in this State, as revealed by the review and analysis.

(c) Strategies based upon scientifically based research, as defined in 20 U.S.C. § 7801(37), that will strengthen the core academic subjects, as set forth in NRS 389.018.

(d) Strategies to improve the academic achievement of pupils enrolled in public schools in this State, including, without limitation, strategies to:

- (1) Instruct pupils who are not achieving to their fullest potential;
- (2) Increase the rate of attendance of pupils and reduce the number of pupils who drop out of school;
- (3) Integrate technology into the instructional and administrative programs of the school districts;
- (4) Manage effectively the discipline of pupils; and
- (5) Enhance the professional development offered for the teachers and administrators employed at public schools in this State to include the activities set forth in 20 U.S.C. § 7801(34), as deemed appropriate by the State Board.

(e) Strategies designed to provide to the pupils enrolled in middle school, junior high school and high school, the teachers and counselors who provide instruction to those pupils, and the parents and guardians of those pupils information concerning:

- (1) The requirements for admission to an institution of higher education and the opportunities for financial aid;
 - (2) The availability of millennium scholarships pursuant to NRS 396.911 to 396.938, inclusive;
- and
- (3) The need for a pupil to make informed decisions about his curriculum in middle school,

junior high school and high school in preparation for success after graduation.

(f) An identification, by category, of the employees of the Department who are responsible for ensuring that each provision of the plan is carried out effectively.

(g) For each provision of the plan, a timeline for carrying out that provision, including, without limitation, a timeline for monitoring whether the provision is carried out effectively.

(h) For each provision of the plan, measurable criteria for determining whether the provision has contributed toward improving the academic achievement of pupils, increasing the rate of attendance of pupils and reducing the number of pupils who drop out of school.

(i) Strategies to improve the allocation of resources from this State, by program and by school district, in a manner that will improve the academic achievement of pupils. If this State has a financial analysis program that is designed to track educational expenditures and revenues to individual schools, the State Board shall use that statewide program in complying with this paragraph. If a statewide program is not available, the State Board shall use the Department's own financial analysis program in complying with this paragraph.

(j) Based upon the reallocation of resources set forth in paragraph (i), the resources available to the State Board and the Department to carry out the plan ~~[-]~~, *including, without limitation, a budget for the overall cost of carrying out the plan.*

(k) A summary of the effectiveness of appropriations made by the Legislature to improve the academic achievement of pupils and programs approved by the Legislature to improve the academic achievement of pupils.

3. The State Board shall:

(a) Review the plan prepared pursuant to this section annually to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan; and

(b) Based upon the evaluation of the plan, make revisions, as necessary, to ensure that the plan is designed to improve the academic achievement of pupils enrolled in public schools in this State.

4. On or before December 15 of each year, the State Board shall submit the plan or the revised plan, as applicable, to the:

(a) Governor;

(b) Committee;

(c) Bureau;

(d) Board of Regents of the University of Nevada;

(e) Council to Establish Academic Standards for Public Schools created by NRS 389.510;

(f) Board of trustees of each school district; and

(g) Governing body of each charter school.

APPENDIX B

Career and Technical Skill Standards

First Round Skill Standards Adopted

- Agriculture Science One and Two Skill Standards*
- Family and Consumer Sciences Skill Standards
- Marketing Education Skill Standards
- Automotive Technology Skill Standards

Second Round Skill Standards Adopted

- Agriculture Mechanical Engineering Technology
- Plant & Environmental Horticulture Science*
- Early Childhood Education and Services
- School Counseling Program
- Computer-Aided Drafting & Design
- Information Technology

Third Round Skill Standards Adopted

- Agriculture Business Systems
- Animal Science/Veterinary Medicine*
- Business Education
- Culinary Arts
- Health Occupations
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Residential Building Construction

Fourth Round Skill Standards

- Agriculture Leadership, Communications, and Policy—Adopted 12-4-04
- Natural Resources and Wildlife Management*—Adopted 12-4-04
- Metalworking—to be presented to the State Board Winter 2005
- Welding—to be presented to the State Board Winter 2005
- Information Technology Curriculum Guide—doesn't require State Board adoption

Fifth Round Skill Standards and Curriculum Guides

- Three Agriculture Curriculum Guides
- Three Trade & Industry Education Standards
- Clothing and Apparel Standards
- Health Occupations Curriculum Guide
- Hospitality and Tourism Curriculum Guide
- Marketing Curriculum Guide

*Qualifies for one Graduation Credit in Science

CTE Program Quality Criteria

Career and Technical Education (CTE) has established 10 program quality criteria standards to provide guidelines to initiate and direct the development and improvement of programs and to create consistency in education programs from district to district. The 10 programs quality criteria are:

1. **Standards and Instruction.** The CTE Program has been organized and sequenced around career paths with clear performance standards leading students to entry-level employment, job advancement, entrepreneurship, advanced education and training, and/or personal use. Instruction is performance-based and integrates academic knowledge and skills, which reflect current and emerging technologies and practices in business, industry, and the home environment.
2. **Leadership and Citizenship Development.** Students develop leadership, citizenship, interpersonal, and employment skills by participating in community service projects and cooperative, individualized, and competitive instructional activities through involvement in the Career and Technical Student Organizations (FFA, FBLA, DECA, FCCLA, SkillsUSA).
3. **Practical Application of CTE Skills.** Practical application of CTE skills is accomplished through classroom simulation and/or work-based learning experiences. These experiences are directly related to, and coordinated and evaluated with, regular classroom instruction through involvement in a supervised work-based learning experience.
4. **Qualified and Competent Personnel.** CTE education teachers are competent and qualified with the appropriate occupational proficiency. In addition, instructors, administrators, guidance/counseling staff, and instructional support staff are involved in an ongoing program for professional development designed to enhance the quality of instruction.
5. **Facilities, Equipment, and Materials.** Facilities, equipment, instructional materials and supplies comply with health and safety standards, reflect and/or simulate current and emerging technologies and applications, and are of sufficient quantity and quality to meet the instructional objectives and individual needs of all students.
6. **Community, Business, and Industry Involvement.** Individuals who represent the community, business, industry, students, parents, districts, staff, postsecondary agencies, and labor, serve on a subject-area advisory committee or technical skills committee to provide guidance. Staff uses the advice of the advisory committee in the design, development, operation, evaluation, and support of each program area.
7. **Career Guidance.** Career and technical education staff, guidance counselors, and other resource personnel provide career guidance services to ensure that students enroll in CTE courses/programs that are consistent with their aptitudes, interests, abilities, and career-path goals.

8. Program Promotion. There is a systematic plan of program promotion to inform students, parents, counselors, other subject-matter teachers, administrators, board members, community members, and business and industry representatives, of options, advantages, quality, accountability, and availability of CTE education programs.
9. Program Accountability and Planning. There is a systematic program assessment using input from instructors, administrators, students, other staff, and advisory committee or technical skills committee members which ensures that the program scope, design, content, instruction, and administration is meeting the program objectives. The annual assessment process is used to develop a Program Improvement Plan for the short- and long-range administration and operation of CTE education programs.
10. Student-Teacher Ratio. High quality instruction in CTE is dependent upon maintaining a student-teacher ratio that ensures effective instruction and safe working conditions. CTE courses are action-oriented, applied-learning activities. Under these conditions, appropriate class size must be maintained.

APPENDIX C

State Board Curriculum Alignment Task Force – Summary

The State Board of Education put in place a Task Force Chaired by Member Myers to look into the status of the alignment of Curriculum to State Standards. The Task Force presented the following recommendations to the Board which were approved by the full board August 5, 2006:

1. **RECOMMENDATION:** That each of the local boards of the 17 districts, and the board of each State Board-sponsored charter school, give written assurances to the Nevada State Board of Education, not later than one year after the State Board adopts new standards, that curriculum has been revised and training or retraining has occurred.
2. **RECOMMENDATION:** That each teacher throughout the State must have timely access to the data to help inform their instructional practices.
3. **RECOMMENDATION:** That each district and charter school integrate a standards-based report card system. The Task Force believes that a blended report card is most appropriate. Such a report card would not exclude traditional letter grades but would include standards as part of the reporting. The Task Force further recommends that teacher evaluation protocols recognize standards-based instruction as a component of the evaluation.
4. **RECOMMENDATION:** That there be mandatory coordination and linkage between professional development and identified needs that impact student achievement. That all programs of professional development be linked to improvement goals and be comprehensive, rather than fragmented, in nature. That all professional development, to the extent possible, be sensitive to the needs of English language learners and special education populations. That mentors should be available to improve retention of teachers in all districts and that funding be available to support this effort.
5. **RECOMMENDATION:** That the Department of Education develop a rubric for textbook adoption that is comprehensive and guides the analysis of the alignment of the textbook with the state standards.

APPENDIX D

No Child Left Behind Professional Development Definition

The remainder of this document can be referenced at <http://www.ed.gov/legislation/ESEA02/index.html>

SEC. 9101.(34) PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

THE TERM PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT' —

(A) includes activities that —

(i) improve and increase teachers' knowledge of the academic subjects the teachers teach, and enable teachers to become highly qualified;

(ii) are an integral part of broad school wide and district wide educational improvement plans;

(iii) give teachers, principals, and administrators the knowledge and skills to provide students with the opportunity to meet challenging state academic content standards and student academic achievement standards;

(iv) improve classroom management skills;

(v) (I) are high quality, sustained, intensive, and classroom-focused in order to have a positive and lasting impact on classroom instruction and the teacher's performance in the classroom; and

(II) are not 1-day or short-term workshops or conferences;

(vi) support the recruiting, hiring, and training of highly qualified teachers, including teachers who became highly qualified through state and local alternative routes to certification;

(vii) advance teacher understanding of effective instructional strategies that are —

(I) based on scientifically based research (except that this subclause shall not apply to activities carried out under part D of title II); and

(II) strategies for improving student academic achievement or substantially increasing the knowledge and teaching skills of teachers; and

(viii) are aligned with and directly related to —

(I) State academic content standards, student academic achievement standards, and assessments; and

(II) the curricula and programs tied to the standards described in subclause (I) except that this subclause shall not apply to activities described in clauses (ii) and (iii) of section 2123(3)(B);

(ix) are developed with extensive participation of teachers, principals, parents, and administrators of schools to be served under this Act;

- (x) are designed to give teachers of limited English proficient children, and other teachers and instructional staff, the knowledge and skills to provide instruction and appropriate language and academic support services to those children, including the appropriate use of curricula and assessments;
- (xi) to the extent appropriate, provide training for teachers and principals in the use of technology so that technology and technology applications are effectively used in the classroom to improve teaching and learning in the curricula and core academic subjects in which the teachers teach;
- (xii) as a whole, are regularly evaluated for their impact on increased teacher effectiveness and improved student academic achievement, with the findings of the evaluations used to improve the quality of professional development;
- (xiii) provide instruction in methods of teaching children with special needs;
- (xiv) include instruction in the use of data and assessments to inform and instruct classroom practice; and
- (xv) include instruction in ways that teachers, principals, pupil services personnel, and school administrators may work more effectively with parents; and

(B) may include activities that —

- (i) involve the forming of partnerships with institutions of higher education to establish school-based teacher training programs that provide prospective teachers and beginning teachers with an opportunity to work under the guidance of experienced teachers and college faculty;
- (ii) create programs to enable paraprofessionals (assisting teachers employed by a local educational agency receiving assistance under part A of title I) to obtain the education necessary for those paraprofessionals to become certified and licensed teachers; and
- (iii) provide follow-up training to teachers who have participated in activities described in subparagraph (A) or another clause of this subparagraph that are designed to ensure that the knowledge and skills learned by the teachers are implemented in the classroom.

APPENDIX E

2005 DISTRICT IMPROVEMENT PLANS – SUMMARY

All seventeen school districts submitted District Improvement Plans in December 2005 pursuant to the requirements of law.

Regarding the identification of primary needs by disaggregated groups:

ENGLISH/LANGUAGE ARTS:

- 11/17 districts identified a need for improvement of ELA achievement for all students.
- 10/17 of the districts identified a need for ELA improvement for IEP students.
- 9/17 of the districts identified a need for ELA improvement for LEP students.
- 9/17 identified a need for ELA improvement for FRL students.

MATH:

- 12/17 districts identified a need for math improvement for all students.
- 10/17 districts identified a need for math improvement for IEP students
- 10/17 districts identified a need for math improvement for LEP students
- 9/17 districts identified a need for math improvement for FRL students.

Regarding the priority goals reflected in the Action Plans:

- 15/17 districts had goals relating to professional development in a variety of areas.
- 11/17 districts had goals to improve achievement through remediation and instructional enhancements.
- 11/17 districts had goals to expand data and interim assessments.
- 10/17 districts had goals to improve LEP services through the use of SIOP or a similar program.
- 8/17 districts had goals to extend instructional time for students in need.
- 7/17 districts had goals to improve special education through enhancement of inclusionary programs or other means.
- 7/17 districts had goals to improve curriculum alignment to state standards.

APPENDIX F

Nevada Professional Development Standards

Standard I:

Professional development is based on what educators need to know and be able to do to assist all students in achieving high academic standards.

Standard II:

Professional development is data-driven. Student performance data is used to determine appropriate targets and priorities for professional development, monitor progress, and make appropriate adjustments.

Standard III:

Professional development is based on findings from sound research, facilitating educators' understanding of the theory underlying the knowledge and skills being learned.

Standard IV:

Professional development is continuous and ongoing, and is part of a comprehensive long-range plan that aligns with school and district School Improvement Plans.

Standard V:

Professional development deepens educators' content knowledge, provides them with research-based instructional strategies to assist students in meeting rigorous academic standards, prepares them to use various types of classroom assessments appropriately, and gives foundational knowledge and skill in classroom management.

Standard VI:

Professional development is built into the day-to-day work of educators at the school level, and fosters professional learning communities by employing collaborative and problem-solving work groups both within and across disciplines and grade levels.

Standard VII:

Professional development is evaluated on the basis of impact on teacher effectiveness and student learning/achievement.

Standard VIII:

Professional development is connected with and supportive of larger school, district, state and federal initiatives for comprehensive school reform, and is an integral part of broad school-wide and district-wide educational improvement plans.

**Nevada Professional Development
Regional Professional Development Program, Statewide Coordinating Council
August 2003**

APPENDIX G

Glossary of Acronyms

ACR	Assembly Concurrent Resolution
ACT	American College Test
AP	Advanced Placement
AYP	Adequate Yearly Progress
BAM	Backwards Assessment Model
CTE	Career and Technical Education
CRT	Criterion Referenced Test
HSPE	High School Proficiency Examination
iNVest	Investing in Nevada’s Education, Students, and Teachers
ELA	English/Language Arts
ELPA	English Language Proficiency Assessment
ePAGE	Electronic Plans, Applications, Grants, and Expenditures
FRL	Free and/or Reduced Price Lunch
GEAR UP	Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs
ICLE	International Center for Leadership in Education
IEP	Individualized Educational Program
LEP	Limited English Proficient
NAEP	National Assessment of Educational Progress
NASA	Nevada Association of School Administrators
NASAA	Nevada Alternate Scales of Academic Achievement
NCCAT	Nevada Comprehensive Curriculum Alignment Tool
NCLB	No Child Left Behind Act
NDE	Nevada Department of Education
NERA	Nevada Education Reform Act
NGA	National Governors’ Association
NRS	Nevada Revised Statutes
NRT	Norm Referenced Test
PEP	Parents Encouraging Parents
PLC	Professional Learning Community
PSAT	Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
RPDP	Regional Professional Development Program
RTI	Response to Instruction
SAGE	Student Achievement Gap Elimination
SAT	Scholastic Assessment Test
UCCSN	University and Community College System of Nevada

APPENDIX H

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) - An accountability system prescribed by the federal government to determine annually if schools are making progress toward narrowing the achievement gap and ensuring that all students are proficient in the areas of mathematics and English/Language Arts by the 2013-2014 school year.

All Levels - As used throughout this document, this refers to all education agencies that are required under state or federal laws to develop and implement improvement plans, schools, districts and the Nevada Department of Education.

Alignment of Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment, and Professional Development - Refers to the match between student learning expectations, what students are taught, what students are tested on, and the ongoing preparation of teachers.

Content and Performance Standards - Content Standards define what students should know and be able to do. Performance standards also known as achievement standards define the level of achievement (what students have to do to demonstrate knowledge/skill).

Criterion-Referenced Test (CRT) - Tests specifically designed to compare student performance against Nevada's content and achievement standards.

Curriculum Mapping - A procedure for collecting data in a school or district about what is being taught and when it is being taught that can be used in conjunction with assessment data to make cumulative revisions in instruction.

Disaggregated Data - Information reported separately for major racial/ethnic groups, students living in poverty, students with disabilities, students with limited English proficiency and other student groups.

Immigrant Program - The immigrant program is to help immigrant students (students not born in the U.S. and have not attended U.S. Schools for more than 3 full academic years) attain English proficiency, develop high levels of academic attainment in English and meet the same State academic content standard all students are expected to meet.

Full Community - Within this document, full community refers to all partners in the education process, such as parents, business organizations, non-profit organizations, schools, institutions of higher education, etc.

Home Language Survey - When a parent enrolls a child in a Nevada school, the parent must complete a form that states the language used in the child's home. If the survey indicates a language other than

English is used in the home, the school is responsible for testing the child to determine if the student requires assistance with English language acquisition.

Limited English Proficient (LEP) - Refers to students who are learning English as a second language and qualify for English language learner services. Also commonly referred to as English language learners (ELL).

Millennium Scholarships – Scholarships funded by tobacco settlement funds for eligible Nevada students to attend institutions of higher education in Nevada.

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)—Known as the Nation’s Report Card, NAEP is a national assessment given to representative groups of students in each state for purposes of looking at state performance over time and comparing states to one another.

No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (and its various Titles, such as I, II, III, IV, V) - The commonly used name to refer to House Referendum 1, the 2001 Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act ESEA).

Norm-Referenced Test (NRT) - Tests designed to compare student performance against the national average of student performance.

Paraprofessional - Individual who works under direct supervision of a licensed teacher to provide instructional assistance to students.

Persistently Dangerous Schools - In accordance with NCLB, Nevada has developed and adopted an Unsafe School Choice Option Policy that includes a state definition of “persistently dangerous schools” based on the percentage of criminal citations issued for various violent criminal offenses. This policy also allows school choice to students who become victims of certain violent offenses.

Professional Learning Communities - A school that operates as a community of continuous inquiry and improvement characterized by supportive and shared leadership, shared values and vision, collective learning and application of that learning, supportive conditions, and shared personal practice.

Schools In Need of Improvement - This refers to schools, districts, or states that have not demonstrated AYP in the same area for two consecutive years or more.

Supplemental Education Services – These services are defined in the NCLB as tutoring and other high-quality academic enrichment services provided in addition to instruction during the school day to increase the achievement of eligible children. Supplemental education services are included in the list of consequences for failure to make AYP for three consecutive years.