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ASSURANCE MADE TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE BY THE NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Pursuant to testimony provided to the Senate Committee on Finance at the April 3, 2003, hearing on Senate Bill (SB) 191 the Nevada Department of Education supports the integration of the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) into state law through SB191. The Department affirms the following assurances in the areas within our jurisdiction based on the understanding that the revisions to the original SB191, as discussed, are made; that there is no state or federal legislation to the contrary; and that related bills and budgets pending in the 2003 Legislature conform to these requirements.

The Department of Education assures the following:

1. Spring testing consisting of 4-8-10 grade NRTs and 3-8 grade CRTs will not result in "over-testing" of students and conforms to the Nevada Legislature's desire to continue norm referenced testing while fulfilling the federal government's NCLB requirements. ←
2. The CRTs in the remaining grades (grades 4, 6, 7) will be piloted and implemented by the 2005-2006 school year. ←
3. State CRT data will be available to districts for the purposes they have outlined in the "White Paper." ←
4. Vendors will be held to 28-day test results turnaround time which will be contained in contract. ←
5. Districts will have the data to distribute accountability report cards to the public prior to the beginning of the school year after the examinations are administered.
6. The State will adopt the following timeline: Schools will be designated by July 31; plans for improvement will be completed by October 31; plans will be approved by the school district by December 15; and implementation will begin immediately thereafter, which is compliant with NCLB. ←
7. Necessary reviews of AYP designation data will be conducted as included in the above timeline. ←
8. Technical assistance will be provided to schools and districts for the provision of school choice, supplemental services or corrective action prior to the beginning of the school year as included in the above timeline. ←

An Equal Opportunity

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NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

9. Districts and schools will have information necessary to inform parents about the school choice option consistent with NCLB and the above timeline.
10. The Department will request no additional funds from the Legislature over and above what it would cost to test Nevada students in the Fall as opposed to the Spring.
11. The Department agrees Spring testing is evaluative in order to be consistent with NCLB.
12. Spring test results will be delivered to districts to permit delivery to teachers prior to the end of the school year.
13. Additionally, the Department will provide districts student information in order for districts to provide such student information to teachers the following year.
14. The Department acknowledges that teachers have the option of changing or altering lesson plans based on the availability of student data.
15. The Department recognizes the need for parent understanding of student progress and prefers that parents have knowledge of the current grade level status of a student as opposed to information that is several months old as provided under the original SB191 Fall testing model.
16. The Department is comfortable with the amount of time parents will have to make decisions based on an eligible school's designation under NCLB.

These assurances have been reviewed by the Nevada State Board of Education.



Jack McLaughlin
Superintendent of Public Instruction

April 29, 2003

Date

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE VERSION

If the Senate Committee on Finance makes the change in Senate Bill 191 to specify two separate tests, NRTs in grades 4, 8, and 10, and separate CRTs in grades 3 through 8, we would like to have the following assurances for the record, on the part of the school districts, the school boards, and the Nevada Department of Education (NDE):

1. That this structure will NOT result in over-testing of students;
 2. That the NDE can assure us that all the revised CRTs can be piloted and implemented by the 2005-06 school year; and
 3. That the school districts will use the state CRTs for the purposes they have outlined in their White Paper, which appears to us to effectively replace their own district CRTs.
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1. The time line for spring testing includes the assumption that the testing company contracted to develop and implement the CRTs will be able to provide results to the NDE in the specified period of 28 days, as noted by the revised accountability time line. Do we have the NDE's assurance that this turn around time will be met, given past performance of test vendors.
 2. That ALL school districts, both urban and rural, will be able to meet the revised time lines. In light of this information, we need your assurance that everyone involved can meet all the deadlines specified under the Act, as amended to spring testing, with regard to federally mandated time lines. Prior to the beginning of the school year, you must:
 - o Distribute accountability report cards to the public PRIOR to the beginning of the school year after the examinations are administered;
 - o Develop, revise, and fully implement* school and district improvement plans BY the beginning of the school year after the examinations are administered;
 - o Perform any necessary reviews of AYP designation data;
 - o Make all needed planning for school choice, supplemental services, or corrective actions for affected schools; and

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE VERSION

That ALL school districts, both urban and rural, will be able to meet the revised time lines. In light of this information, we need your assurance that everyone involved can meet all the deadlines specified under the Act, as amended to spring testing, with regard to federally mandated time lines. Prior to the beginning of the school year, you must:

- o Inform parents about the school choice option.

Further, that you will be able to perform all these requirements over the summer months without any additional expense related to these functions; in other words, that this approach will cost the same, or will be less costly than the processes and deadlines under fall testing.

That you are comfortable with changing the system from a diagnostic process to an evaluative process—that you find it useful to know whether a 4th grade student, for example, met 3rd grade requirements, versus finding out what can be done to help the student meet 3rd grade requirements.

That, in accordance with your White Paper statements and your time line, that the spring test reports will be delivered to teachers prior to the end of the school year; further, that you are aware that this schedule makes it unlikely the teacher will be able to address the needs of the student or the class as a whole in the short time remaining.

Further, that the school districts will be able to deliver the individual student scores to the teacher of those students the following year. Also, that under your position as contained in the White Paper, that the teacher will have the time and opportunity to address the individual needs of that student and the collective needs of the classroom. Additionally, that it is your understanding that the teacher will be changing his or her lesson plans, based upon the results of students that were taught by other teachers the previous year.

7. That you are comfortable with the fact that parents will NOT know until the end of the school year about how their child has been performing on a test of state standards until the very end or possibly after the end of the school year?
8. Although we understand you might be giving preliminary indications to parents at affected schools, we would like your assurances that you are comfortable providing parents with formal notice concerning their ability to choose the school their child will be attending for the next school year, only two or three weeks prior to the beginning of the school year.