

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

**Eighty-Second Session
February 23, 2023**

The Committee on Education was called to order by Chair Shannon Bilbray-Axelrod at 1:34 p.m. on Thursday, February 23, 2023, in Room 3138 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. The meeting was videoconferenced to Room 4401 of the Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada. Copies of the minutes, including the Agenda [[Exhibit A](#)], the Attendance Roster [[Exhibit B](#)], and other substantive exhibits, are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau and on the Nevada Legislature's website at www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/82nd2023.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Shannon Bilbray-Axelrod, Chair
Assemblywoman Angie Taylor, Vice Chair
Assemblywoman Natha C. Anderson
Assemblyman Reuben D'Silva
Assemblywoman Alexis Hansen
Assemblywoman Melissa Hardy
Assemblyman Gregory Koenig
Assemblywoman Selena La Rue Hatch
Assemblyman Richard McArthur
Assemblywoman Erica Mosca
Assemblywoman Clara Thomas
Assemblywoman Selena Torres

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

None



STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Alex Drozdoff, Committee Policy Analyst
Asher Killian, Committee Counsel
Nick Christie, Committee Manager
Funmi Sheddy, Committee Secretary
Ashley Torres, Committee Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT:

Dale A. R. Erquiaga, Acting Chancellor, Nevada System of Higher Education
Nick Schneider, Government Affairs Analyst, Vegas Chamber
Marc J. Kahn, M.D., M.B.A., M.A.C.P., F.R.C.P., Dean, Kirk Kerkorian School of
Medicine, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Paul J. Hauptman, M.D., Dean, School of Medicine, University of Nevada, Reno
Vishvaas Ravikumar, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Dafhney Ferrer, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Mackenzie Montero, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada
Kallie Griffin, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada
Anthony Ruiz, representing Nevada State College
Lawrence Weekly, representing College of Southern Nevada
Vince Saavedra, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, Southern Nevada Building Trades
Unions
Danny Thompson, representing International Union of Operating Engineers, Local
Union No. 3 and No. 12
J. Kyle Dalpe, Ph.D., President, Western Nevada College
Karin Hilgersom, President, Truckee Meadows Community College
Renee Davis, Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs and
Community Colleges, Nevada System of Higher Education
DeRionne Pollard, President, Nevada State College

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

[Roll was called, and protocol was reviewed.] We are going to have our presentation on Assembly Bill 74, then we will hear a presentation on the Nevada System of Higher Education. I will now open the hearing on Assembly Bill 74. This measure revises provisions relating to higher education.

Assembly Bill 74: Revises provisions relating to higher education. (BDR 34-377)

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

To present this bill, we have our own Assemblywoman Mosca who will be copresenting with Dale Erquiaga, Acting Chancellor, Nevada System of Higher Education. Just a reminder, this is a bill that came to our Committee from our Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education. We have had lots of vetting on this. Still, please ask questions. Assemblywoman

Mosca got her gold star because she went back and watched the committee meeting that, as she pointed out, was eight hours long.

Assemblywoman Erica Mosca, Assembly District No. 14:

I am presenting Assembly Bill 74, which revises provisions relating to higher education. I am proud to be joined by my education colleague, our Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) Chancellor, who will help me present the bill today.

As an education advocate focused on opportunity, access, and choices, I am excited for this bill. The bill before you comes as a recommendation from the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education. I would like to begin with some brief background information that explains what led to this recommendation. During the 2021 Session, Senate Bill 342 of the 81st Session was passed, which allowed the Nevada System of Higher Education Board of Regents to enter into agreements with publicly or privately owned medical facilities to promote and enhance medical or health education programs at our universities. In practice this bill opened the door to a partnership between Renown Health and the University of Nevada, Reno, School of Medicine, which has since resulted in a partnership that has developed a clinical research center, expansion of the School of Medicine's clinical trial portfolio, and an increase in residency programs.

With the success of S.B. 342 of the 81st Session, the Joint Interim Standing Committee on Education considered the idea that all universities—the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV), University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), and the Desert Research Institute—should be able to enter into public-private partnerships (P3). I would also like to note that the UNLV Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine was also built by P3. Specifically, Dr. David Damore, Interim Executive Director of the Lincy Institute and Brookings Mountain West, professor and chair of the department of political science at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, highlighted the need to codify university-based public-private partnerships using blanket language. Doing so could help to facilitate more efficient and effective partnerships between our universities and other entities that promote the public good, including making sure there is more access, opportunities, and choices. This was unanimously voted on by the Interim Committee on Education and is what A.B. 74 is asking for today. At this time, I will yield my time to the Chancellor.

Dale A. R. Erquiaga, Acting Chancellor, Nevada System of Higher Education:

I know many members of this Committee from my previous lives. It is a pleasure to be here in this role and discuss this proposal before you. The System, working with your legal counsel and my legal counsel, has offered an amendment [[Exhibit C](#)] that really does two primary things. It broadens the bill from its original intent for universities to any System of Higher Education institution. As you know, there are eight institutions within the Nevada System of Higher Education. You will hear me talk about them more. We request that the bill be broadened to include all the institutions. In addition, we would add language around student life to this measure so it broadens the possibility for these kinds of partnerships. The Nevada System of Higher Education did not participate in depth during the Interim Committee. We were in a bit of transition last year, as you may remember. I apologize; my

counsel and your counsel were only able to speak this week, but I think they have agreed on a way to move forward with this bill.

On behalf of the Board of Regents, this bill does the intent of the Committee and, as the Assemblywoman has outlined for you, it gives us more tools. I would also let the Committee know that the System of Higher Education recently went through some performance audits at the request and direction of the Legislative auditors. They asked us to seek clarification about our P3 abilities and powers. One of the questions that I will leave with your general counsel is, Would this address the auditors' concerns? Their concerns specifically point to *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) Chapter 338 which is not within the jurisdiction of this Committee, but for my own sake, I would like to know if this will help me address those concerns as I have accepted that finding. If not, I will find another vehicle. In summary, Madam Chair and members of the Committee, I am here to support the Assemblywoman's presentation of this measure with the amendment as offered by the System.

Assemblywoman Torres:

You talk about P3 agreements. Can you explain a little bit more what that is and when it is used?

Dale Erquiaga:

I am certainly not an expert on public-private partnerships and that is what a P3 is. A P3 is a partnership between a government entity or public body and a nonprofit or an external for-profit enterprise to share responsibilities. Typically, they are used in some governments to extend the budget and to bring programs on more rapidly. The P3 statute in Nevada is in capital improvement projects, *Nevada Revised Statutes* Chapter 338. That statute points only at transportation projects. Partnerships on the Nevada System of Higher Education side have, as you have seen through the enabling language, dealt with medical work. We have a real estate transaction over the Kerkorian Medical Education Building in Las Vegas. That is how that building was built. It was built partly with state funds and partly with private funds. It was built rapidly and is online. Folks in government like me find them to be one more tool to get work done efficiently, cost-effectively, and quickly. I hope that helps answer your question.

Assemblywoman Torres:

Would this have to do also with the construction of buildings, how they are built, and what agreements are there? Unfortunately, we have been having conversations in the Government Affairs Committee, which I am sure your team has followed, regarding the lease buyback program and how it is used. They can circumvent paying prevailing wage. I just want to see if this will continue to address the concerns that we already have and expand NSHE's ability to continue those programs.

Dale Erquiaga:

I will defer to your counsel. That is one of my questions too. Because this is not in NRS Chapter 338, would it directly apply to construction projects? I am not an expert in that area of the law. I will leave that as an open question.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

That is what we are discussing up here. I am sure that our legal counsel has a great answer because he is already dialed in.

Asher Killian, Committee Counsel:

Generally pursuant to *Nevada Revised Statutes* 338.075, any contracts for construction work for NSHE for which the cost exceeds \$100,000, prevailing wage would apply. However, in the context of a particular public-private partnership, not knowing the terms of the agreement and which party is responsible for which part of the work, I would not be able to say for certain that there would be a contract for construction work by NSHE as part of that partnership. If the contract was to a different entity for the benefit of NSHE to perform the work, then it is not clear that prevailing wage provisions would apply.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

I will work with you all, and we might have some language that we would like to include. I have a rule that amendments need to come in 24 hours in advance, and I will be a little bit okay with it if it is like 20 to 23 hours, but I got this after 1:30 p.m. We are going to put a pin in that, and we will have more discussions. Thank you for bringing that up, and we are aware of that issue as well.

Assemblywoman La Rue Hatch:

My question is with these public-private partnerships. Could this result in a reduction of faculty or staff; as you are replacing employees who are on the Public Employees' Retirement System and receiving state benefits with contracted teachers or custodians or private cleaning facilities? We could lose some of those public jobs.

Dale Erquiaga:

That is certainly not our intention. There are folks here from UNR who might be able to describe for you the Renown partnership. There are folks from Renown in our facilities and vice versa. I have not heard of any loss of jobs. This is more about some of the efficiencies and, in that case, the teaching opportunities. That is the most active partnership of its kind. If you would like, I will be happy to politely dodge your question and ask someone from the university perhaps to come forward. I think they are here.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

I hate to tell you, I do not see any phone-a-friends running up to the desk. Does anyone feel comfortable talking about this issue? [There was no response.]

Dale Erquiaga:

I will state for the record that is certainly not our intention. If I can provide additional information on what I do find from my colleagues, I will do so for the Committee.

Assemblywoman Taylor:

I am a little familiar with the Renown partnership. Do you have any ideas? Can you give us an idea of how you envision this may manifest itself with future partnerships?

Dale Erquiaga:

I will be honest and say that those partnerships of which I am aware are more in the construction and real estate space. The University of Nevada, Reno has a proposed partnership about the Gateway project. I think Nevada State College has one under consideration and then the work that has been done around the medical campus of UNLV. Those are the proposals that have reached me in the eight months that I have been your acting chancellor. Those in the capital construction space are those that have reached me. Dr. Damore, when he presented this proposal from the Brookings Institution, may have indicated others. I did not watch all eight hours of the testimony, but that is the extent of my knowledge.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

I imagine when we have folks coming up in support, they might possibly talk about some ideas that they might have.

Assemblywoman Anderson:

My question is not related to the language itself. I am wondering what the need is of this bill. It sounds like there is already an avenue to be able to create these partnerships. I am wondering why there was a need for it to go through the legislative process as opposed to simply going through the Nevada System of Higher Education with the Board of Regents process.

Dale Erquiaga:

The Nevada System of Higher Education was not the sponsor of this measure. One of our professors was, so that question is probably more appropriate going to him. What I do recall in reading the minutes of that committee hearing, the bill was to provide more opportunities for our institutions beyond the medical space. The bill that was passed that the Assemblywoman so eloquently represented was about medical partnerships and I think the positioning, if I could speak for the bill creator, was to provide more opportunities. If I were to retreat to the traditional position of the Nevada System of Higher Education, I would say we have this authority today. I also believe that anything we can do with you, to be very clear, is a good thing. I also have an audit that says I ought to ask for you to help me do this. As Speaker Emeritus Joseph E. Dini, Jr. once taught me to say, it is a good bill, even if it is a bill that maybe could have been done through Regent policy, but we are happy to work with you.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

I was going to have our counsel clarify a couple of things on the necessity of this bill.

Asher Killian:

I believe the Chancellor perfectly stated the genesis of the bill from the Interim Committee process. Just to echo his comment about whether NSHE currently has this authority or not, I think that there has been a difference of opinion as a result of the audit as to how far the constitutional grant of power to the Board of Regents to manage the internal affairs of the state university goes. This bill would codify the power that I think the Regents may believe

that they have, but the auditor had some questions about whether they had, by making it explicit in statute that they do have that power.

Assemblywoman Anderson:

Thank you for how eloquently you can defend both your employee as well as the process and how we need to work together as two different governing bodies.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

Congratulations, Assemblywoman Mosca, on your first presentation. With that, I will ask anyone in support to come up to the microphones and give your two-minute testimony.

Nick Schneider, Government Affairs Analyst, Vegas Chamber:

The Vegas Chamber is in support of A.B. 74. We believe that section 1 will give additional tools to our higher education system to enhance Nevada's educational programs by leveraging the expertise of public and private entities in our community.

Marc J. Kahn, M.D. M.B.A., M.A.C.P., F.R.C.P., Dean, Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine, University of Nevada, Las Vegas:

My colleague and I are working together to improve health care in this great state of Nevada. I am here to testify in support of A.B. 74. At the Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine, we were the generous beneficiaries of a brand-new medical education building that is state-of-the-art and beautiful. We could not do that were it not for the public-private partnership between NSHE and the Nevada Health and Bioscience Corporation, our development and philanthropic organization. That is going to be the frontpiece of the School of Medicine. It will be used to attract the students of the future and is really a [unintelligible] for economic development for our medical district.

Paul J. Hauptman, M.D., Dean, School of Medicine, University of Nevada, Reno:

I am supportive alongside my colleague, Dr. Kahn. I can say from the experience of the last four months that the affiliation between Renown Health and University of Nevada, Reno, School of Medicine has been going extremely well. This dates back to, as you may know, June 2021, and that is an example of a partnership that has worked well and has a bright future.

Vishvaas Ravikumar, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

Hello, I am a fourth-year medical student at the Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine, at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. I am president of the medical school class of 2023. I just wanted to express my support of this bill. The Medical Education Building has been an outstanding facility for us. It has really changed the entire atmosphere of our school. It is an amazing facility if any of you have visited it, and I think it is going to greatly improve the education we can offer to Nevadans going forward.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

Before you leave, are you planning on staying in Nevada?

Vishvaas Ravikumar:

I plan on practicing in Nevada long term.

Dafhney Ferrer, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am also a fourth-year medical student at the Kirk Kerkorian School of Medicine, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. The opening of the Medical Education Building has been a monumental moment in my training. Since its opening, we have been bringing our family and friends and showing them where we are receiving our medical training. As a first-generation student that was special to me as well. We have been having lots of events and student engagement, and I am happy to see the fruits of this labor. I support the bill, A.B. 74.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

Are you planning on practicing in Nevada?

Dafhney Ferrer:

I plan on practicing in Nevada.

Mackenzie Montero, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada:

I am a second-year medical student at the University of Nevada, Reno, School of Medicine. I am here to voice my support for A.B. 74. I believe that this bill is going to have a great impact on our education, and it is going to expand the opportunities that we currently have for education here in Nevada. To answer your question, I will not be going to residency in Nevada because there are no residencies for the specialty I am interested in. However, I do plan on coming back.

Kallie Griffin, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada:

I am also a second-year medical student at the University of Nevada, Reno, School of Medicine. I also support this bill. I also will not be staying in Nevada for residency because there are no residency opportunities for me. I do feel that this bill and the partnerships that it might allow and the expansions that it can allow to our education will provide residency, so in the future students can stay here for their residencies and then be practicing physicians here. To answer your question, I would love to return to Nevada and serve this community as a physician.

Anthony Ruiz, representing Nevada State College:

I would like to state for the record that Nevada State College is in full support of this bill. Public-private partnerships are an important component of what we do at the college as we develop out our future lands.

Lawrence Weekly, representing College of Southern Nevada:

I do want to thank our President, Dr. Federico Zaragoza, who is also present here this afternoon. We are in support of A.B. 74. We support the amended language that was presented by our Chancellor, Mr. Erquiaga. Thank you for this opportunity, and congratulations to Assemblywoman Mosca for presenting her very first bill in the Education Committee.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

I will close support and open up opposition on Assembly Bill 74. Is there anyone here in Carson City in opposition of Assembly Bill 74?

Vince Saavedra, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, Southern Nevada Building Trades Unions:

I want to thank the Kirk Kerkorian School for building with union labor. I greatly appreciate that, and our membership appreciates it. I want to respectfully oppose this bill. We cannot support this bill as written because the standards are not defined. We have an amendment [[Exhibit D](#)] that I would like the Committee to look over that may resolve these issues.

Danny Thompson, representing International Union of Operating Engineers, Local Union No. 3 and No. 12:

We oppose this bill because the standards are not defined. The committee counsel is exactly right that without specific language in this bill—and I believe Mr. Saavedra's proposed amendment has been given to the committee secretary—has been our experience when it comes to prevailing wage unless it is clearly defined, we always end up in court and it costs us a lot of money to go to court and try to convince the court of what you meant. We find it is better to put it on the record that if you are going to use public money for public purposes then you must pay this. The prevailing wage, for those who do not understand it, is a standard of wage in a community where the people work. It is done by survey every couple of years by the Labor Commissioner. They survey every category of worker and whichever rate prevails is the rate that must be paid on public projects. Defining that standard would certainly move us in support of this bill.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

Is there any more testimony in opposition of Assembly Bill 74? [There was none.] I will now open up testimony in neutral of Assembly Bill 74. [There was none.] Assemblywoman Mosca, would you like to make any closing remarks?

Assemblywoman Mosca:

I wanted to say I am grateful for your questions so we can continue to work on the bill and make sure it works for everyone. I want to thank all the young people that came in, our future leaders and our doctors. We appreciate you being here today. As a first-generation college graduate and an educator for the past 15 years supporting first-generation youth to access higher education, I urge you to support A.B. 74 because it offers the chance to strengthen opportunities, access, and resources for young people.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

With that, we will close the bill hearing on A.B. 74 and we will open up the presentation from the Nevada System of Higher Education. We will now hear the presentation from Acting Chancellor Dale Erquiaga of the state of higher education in Nevada.

Dale A. R. Erquiaga, Acting Chancellor, Nevada System of Higher Education:

I am here to give you some background information as an overview of the system which I have the honor of serving in this time of transition. Before I proceed, I want to recognize that the Vice Chair of the Board of Regents, Mr. Joe Arrascada, is with us today, as is Regent Heather Brown from Clark County. Mr. Arrascada is from Washoe County. I am fortunate that two of my bosses are here seeing how I do. I am also joined today by several university, community college, and state college presidents and staff as well as members of my own staff. I have done this presentation a couple of times here since session has begun, and I always say they are here on pins and needles that I do not say something wrong because I have only been in this job for eight months. They are here to answer your questions when I get out over my skis.

I want to talk to you to a little bit today about three things: who we are at your System of Higher Education, who do we serve, because I think folks often have a point of view about what a college or university student looks like, and I like to share what our family of students looks like. Lastly, I will give you some background on how we are doing in that service. There are a whole bunch of slides in the appendix. I promise I am not going through all 49 slides.

We are one system [page 3, [Exhibit E](#)]. A mission statement adopted by the Board of Regents is that we provide worlds of opportunities. As you have heard me say, there are eight institutions within the system: two universities, a state college, four community colleges, and a research institute. We serve the gamut of Nevada's needs. The System office and System computing services, think of that as the Chancellor's office that operates on behalf of the Board of Regents.

Higher education in Nevada dates to the administration of President Ulysses S. Grant. In 1874 students began the first course at what was then the university. There was only one in 1874 and it was in Elko. The system has grown. In 1968, we began to call that entity the System. That is when the Chancellor's job came into being, first created by the Board of Regents, subsequently codified in the 69th Session by this body. The System is governed by 13 constitutional officers, the elected Board of Regents who represent geographic districts throughout our state [page 4]. We are led at the system level by eight incredible presidents who represent our universities, community colleges, state college, and research institute.

I think it is important to underscore a couple of things [page 5]. We are cognizant that we must provide higher education in this state consistent with the state's resources. We do receive state appropriations. Thank you. You may have heard us presenting in the money committees so far this year. We are part of the state. We use state resources to deliver on behalf of the state the mission of acquiring, transmitting, and preserving knowledge throughout the region, nation, and world.

I will use this as an opportunity to say that it is not just words on paper. Our institutions are in many instances world-renowned and serve geographies across the globe. I will use the Desert Research Institute as an example. Unlike the Chair, with due respect, who has picked

between my medical schools, I love all eight of my institutions the same. I will call out for you the Desert Research Institute, which works across the globe. I have seen their work in Xi'an, China, personally. We are privileged to have a global reach. Our universities and public health and in any number of environmental issues also have that reach. We have students across the globe. Great Basin College, which happens to be our smallest institution, has an online student from Senegal. I have seen her presentations of her work. We are serving the people of Nevada, and I think we have a worldwide reputation of which you ought to be proud, because we are.

The Board of Regents has established six goals for governance of the system [page 6, [Exhibit E](#)]. Several of these goals date to 2018 under the work of Chancellor Thom Reilly, who many of you probably know or served with. We are an access system. We are interested in providing access to all in Nevada. We are, of course, focused on student success and that includes what we now call closing institutional performance gaps in K-12. They used to be called achievement gaps. We try not to call them that anymore. That makes it about the student, and I think this phrase makes it about us. These are institutional gaps; it is where we can fill in and surround our students with support.

We have an important role to play in meeting Nevada's workforce needs. The community colleges are the number one engine for workforce development in our System, through their certificate programs, their associates degrees, and in some instances their bachelor's degrees, but we do workforce at all levels. I always say I have a liberal arts degree so, even for a political scientist like me, that is a workforce program. Thankfully, I got a job when I graduated. I like folks to focus on the breadth and depth of awards which we confer from certificates through to Ph.D.s, and I want folks to understand that workforce for us means contributing to the Nevada economy and to the economic mobility of our fellow residents.

We are focused very much on solutions-focused research as a system. The Board this last fall wisely added the goal around coordination, accountability, and transparency. The Board adopts policy; their Chancellor carries out that policy in concert with the eight presidents. It is important to this Board specifically that we do so in a manner that is coordinated and that is accountable to the Board, to the taxpayers, to the Legislature, to the Governor, to our employees, and to our students. We do so in a very transparent way. I will be candid, we have not always had that history and the system is continually improving. If you look at our dashboards, we are very upfront about our data and our successes. I think this Board has rightly given me and the presidents the direction to continue that.

Last fall, the Board also adopted what we are calling "performance imperatives" [page 7]. The subject matter of these imperatives is exactly as described; it is imperative for our future success. In the time that I am chancellor and I hope throughout this year, as the search goes on for a new chancellor, the System will focus on the demography of who we are as an employer. You will see, I have about 14,000 to 15,000 coworkers on any given day. We understand a lot about our demography: who we are racially and ethnically. We also know that we have made great strides and need to make greater strides in being representative of the student population that we serve. I will show you some data about both of those things.

Also this year—not just because it is a legislative session, but because it is critical to our success—we are very focused on adequacy and equitably distributed funding for our system. If you have heard the budget committee deliberations, you know that Governor Lombardo has proposed a funding formula study, and we are working very closely with the administration and this body on what that looks like for the future of funding in our state.

Not surprisingly, employees are distributed most heavily at the two universities. Universities are large, and they employ lots of people [page 8, [Exhibit E](#)]. You can see as you get to the bottom of the page, "SA/SCS." That is me, and that is the computing services folks who are about half of that number.

I always present this slide and I always do so with some trepidation, but I want you to understand we are not all full-time employees [page 9]. It depends on the institution for how much we rely on a letter of appointment (LOA)—that is part-time faculty or administrative staff. As you can see, our community colleges are very reliant on part-time staff. That is a product of how much money they receive. They are smaller. Their budgets are therefore constrained and, to be blunt, LOAs and part-time employees are less expensive. I give you this information. All our employees, all 14,000 to 15,000 of them, work diligently and are all high performers, and they are distributed in this very interesting way. There is a trend nationally where many places, due to budget constraints, are being forced to replace permanent faculty or full-time positions, to your question earlier, with part-time positions. I think it is important for you as policymakers to keep an eye on this number as we go forward.

This is the slide that I alluded to earlier about our distribution by race and ethnicity [page 10]. The little pie chart on the left is from fall of 2012, and you can see 74 percent of our coworkers were white. In the ensuing ten years, that number has gone down to 64 percent. We have made progress in diversifying our hiring. We still do not look like our students, but the Board has been clear in setting the equity imperative. This is something we ought to focus on. As I talk about who we serve, I will tell you why.

Today there are just about 105,000 students in our institutions. You can see from this slide we peaked in 2010 [page 12]. That was in the depths of the Great Recession. Typically, in America college-going behavior increases during a recession. One does not have a job so one goes back to get reskilled, right? I think we all understand that that is historically true in the community college space. The most recent turmoil that we have all experienced as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic has sort of belied that history. Students are not returning to the institutions at the levels that we have seen before. You can see here: we peaked in 2010. We were moving along to 2019. We were almost back at our high point. Then of course the pandemic arrived and so our enrollment drops off. We know that when the economy is doing well and there are jobs, people sit out. We are concerned about this number. It causes all kinds of problems that flow through the System because we are compensated by the state based on how many students we have and how many credits they can take. If our students are working, thus not carrying a full credit load, the amount of money that is derived from the state goes down. This number is a purely budgetary problem

and impact for us as Nevadans. I think we should also think a lot about this: what is underlying our historically low matriculation from high school to postsecondary behavior?

You can see on this slide where our students attend [page 13, [Exhibit E](#)]. Not surprisingly, about 65 percent of my students attend southern Nevada institutions. I think people understand this, but I think it is important to look at the numbers. A great number of our students, about a third, are part-time. They work as well as attend our institutions [page 14]. That is clearly more common among the community college environments. People at a university more often are full-time. It says a great deal about the demands we place on our faculty, the demands we place on institutions, student support staff, and advisers—all the folks who surround a student with supports to ensure that they persist and complete or stay in college and graduate. I would like you to think about this as you think about what our faculty population and employee population look like. I want you to understand this about our students as well.

About a third of our students here are in my age bracket [page 15]. They are over the traditional age of 18 to 24. When people think of college, they think of all those movies made in the 1950s, and the movies with Elvis and all those things, and they think that is what college is. In our system it is not that. About a third of our folks have returned to school or are reskilling: they might be there for a certificate, they might be there for a Ph.D. program. There are folks in this building who have done that, maybe in this room. I would like you to understand who we are serving and the complexities that brings.

In 2015, the Nevada System of Higher Education shifted from being a majority white-serving system to a system that today serves a majority of students of color. This is partly reflective of our demography as a state. Nevada has changed. It is also indicative of the good work done in terms of recruitment by our institutions. Three of our institutions are classified under Title III of the federal Higher Education Act as AANAPISI—that is Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-serving institutions in the low-income space [page 17]. We are very proud to serve that population in our state. Five of our institutions are Hispanic-serving institutions under Title V of the Higher Education Act. Large numbers of their students, if not majorities of their students, are Hispanic. Lumped together, these are often simply called minority-serving. You will hear us use that term as well. I think we should take some pride in this.

Those of you in the K-12 space will perhaps empathize with me on this when I was your state superintendent. I was used to understanding poverty in my schools based on the free or reduced-price lunch label, FRL it is called. I was surprised to arrive in postsecondary, because I did not really pay attention to the data, and there is no similar denominator or denomination for what that is in our system. The closest we have is Pell disbursements or Pell eligibility. Pell is the federal grant for financial assistance. If you look at this slide [page 19], it shows you where our institutions are in serving students who may come from a lower income and thus qualify for that aid. These numbers are all attended to by the presidents and their staff. They all need work, given the economic mobility challenges we

have as a state and the number of Nevadans who live at, below, or somewhere near the poverty line. I think these numbers have also improved over time.

It is important to think about the types of students, whether that is their race, ethnicity, their income background. Another data point that I was surprised to not have, and I will say this because Regent Arrascada quizzed me about this when I was considered for appointment for this job, and that is what we would call in K-12, special education, or a student with some level of disability. We do not collect that data in that way. I cannot even show you. Thanks to Regent Arrascada, we are working with the Disability Resource Centers on our campuses to begin to at least enumerate what that looks like. I come from the world that if you count it, it matters. As I have said before, if you enumerate, thus you operate. I think for you as policymakers and for my Board as policymakers attending to these details is important so we know who we are serving.

The state of Nevada has several financial aid programs. You see the largest here that run through this body [page 20, [Exhibit E](#)]. These are all funded by the Legislature, and you can see how they are distributed. In addition, there is a large pot of money that the Board of Regents itself sets aside, partly from its state appropriation and partly from student fees. Our students contribute to a financial aid scholarship pool to benefit each other. One of the things I am proudest of, and maybe embarrassed by, is that is the largest pool of money in financial aid in our system. That is commendable for our students. We should consider that: we are relying on them to fund the education of their peers.

Next week this body will begin to hear fee waiver bills [page 21]. They are coming fast and furious in this Legislature. We are doing our best to work with you on that. The first fee waiver no longer exists; it had to do with senior citizens. I think that was 20 years ago. The longest today is the National Guard fee waiver that goes back many years as well, a legislatively mandated fee waiver. The Board of Regents added a foster youth fee waiver six years ago to target that population. Then you can see the others in the military space have been added by this body. The Native American fee waiver was enacted in the last legislative session. It has taken off here. There are more folks to be served in that space. There are other bills moving.

This is an unfunded mandate to the System of Higher Education. You waive the fee; you mandate that we waive the fee. Someone still pays those costs, which means the institutions absorb the fee waived and use state appropriations or other student monies. In total we receive most of our money from either the state or our students. There is this whole other category of money, roughly a billion dollars, that is contracts and research. That money is all earmarked. I cannot use that money to cover a fee waived over here. The money that I must use is fees paid by students or appropriation from the Legislature. To continue this good work for these special populations, my Board would love the Legislature to consider setting aside some money so that we could reimburse our institutions, so they are not absorbing these costs as they continue to grow. They serve important populations. It is an important part of the access mission. There is no such thing as free.

The Chair asked me to talk a little bit about dual enrollment programs. We enroll high school students in credit-bearing programs. This slide is the research division's definition of high school-enrolled [page 22, [Exhibit E](#)]. Not all 13,000 of these students are enrolled in what we would call a program. This might be someone who is in high school where there is a program. Truckee Meadows Community College has a long-standing program where they are taking multiple credits. It might be my granddaughter taking Chinese at her high school. My granddaughter is not currently taking Chinese, but she might. That is a one-off distinct from the programs, all those students are aggregated here. You can see that this number has grown consistently, and here you can see the spread. This data is projected for the current year based solely on one semester. This is a space that is growing. We are providing more college credit at the high school level so that students enter more ready and with a bank of credits to complete their community college, university, or state college education.

I have heard folks say that we are just offering these programs to well-off white children. I am proud to say these numbers have changed as well. In the academic school year 2014-2015 [page 24] most students enrolled in high school for college credit programs were white. Those numbers are down now to about a third. I think that is important. We are an access system. We have that mission, and we embrace it. I think that we are giving a leg up to more Nevadans by moving in this way.

This is a quick snapshot of the awards conferred by our institutions over these last five years and the five-year change [page 26]. You can see the raw numbers of how awards are conferred. Remember an award for us can be a skill certificate all the way up to a professional credential. We have made gains. If you look at our data, we have further work to do in the conference of awards to students of color [page 27]. These lines have also changed over time so that we are better serving all our students.

On the next three slides [pages 28, 29, and 30] I will show you, by institution type, the graduation rates. The national average is about 63 percent. The institution in the north, the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), is closer to the national average than the university in the south. I was asked this question in the Senate. We have all done a little bit of analysis, some of this has to do with being an urban university; the level of readiness of students who begin there. I have seen data that even the ACT scoring is different for some students as they enroll at University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) versus UNR, so they serve different student types. This is not a reflection on UNLV's performance. This is about those kinds of supports that are necessary in a more urban environment. It is still a focus for President Whitfield and his entire team to improve this graduation rate. The Board closely monitors graduation rates as they do persistence rates. Nevada State College, physically located in Henderson, has its data continually improving as well. Community colleges are across the gamut and, again, it is about who they serve. For example, the College of Southern Nevada on the left, has a very heavy part-time population. They are not there necessarily to get a degree, they might be there to transfer out. They might take longer because they are working. I will also say these rates have dramatically improved over the last 12 years. The Board has really leaned in here and therefore so have the institutions in improving these completion rates.

This slide I give to you because you cover the gamut of education, and it is for me probably the most troubling thing I will present to you [page 31, [Exhibit E](#)]. This is an analysis of data about matriculation. That is a fancy word for continuing from high school to postsecondary. What this slide includes is those Nevada high school students who continued to one of our institutions, to any other postsecondary institution in the state, including private schools, who went to work or, the red, we do not know, they do not show up in any database. Now not surprisingly in 2019-2020, that was the year of the pandemic, lots of folks sat out, kids took gap years, I will give you that one. Look at the data before that, 34 to 44 percent of Nevada high school students are not going into the postsecondary or to work. If they have moved away and they are working in some other state, we have lost them. They have bled out of the data. I have heard it particularly in southern Nevada, there are thousands of students who are unaffiliated.

This is a policy challenge for us as Nevadans, and so there is just the red numbers so you can sort of get your head around what could we do to improve matriculation from high school together: the K-12 system, the System where I work, and this body [page 32]. Then think about the percentage of Nevadans overall who today hold some form of postsecondary credential, a certificate all the way up to an advanced degree. According to a recent study released by the Lumina Foundation, we are last in the nation in the percent of our population who hold a postsecondary credential. If you count workforce credentials, it is about 40 percent of us. If you take out certificates and just count degrees, it is 30 percent of us. This is a historic problem. We have been a hospitality and a retail industry-driven state my entire life, so most of the last century. In my childhood we were heavily dependent on agriculture. Mining jobs in those days did not require as much postsecondary. They do today require postsecondary work. This is a policy area that I think we ought to be concerned about. What can we do better to ladder students up from K-12? What can you and our colleagues in K-12 do as well in that space?

I am happy to wrap up and offer you, in the spirit of my earlier comments about working together with this body, there are three things here that really are driven off my Board's goals [page 34]. We could work together, I hope during this session, to aid that matriculation from high school number—to aid student success, closing gaps, workforce development research. There may be policies which you wish to pursue, and then finally you may wish to pursue policies as you were in the former bill, if I may reference Assemblywoman Mosca's fine work. That bill is about collaboration, folks. There are policies that you might advance to help the board and my colleagues in this space. With that, I am happy to stop talking and attempt to answer your questions or find you someone who can.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod

I know we have questions. I am going to ask a question because I am going to be called away to present a bill in a few minutes. I was going to ask you a question about slide 14 [page 14, [Exhibit E](#)]. You talked about the nontraditional students, and we are definitely seeing it down in the south where we have adults, nontraditional learners, and there are unique challenges that I am sure you are aware of. I was wondering if you could talk about plans to focus resources and what that looks like for this unique population.

Dale Erquiaga:

I will give you one example and then I would encourage any of my colleagues who might have details here to step forward. One of the challenges for part-time students, as well as students who come from a lower-income family, is understanding how they work in this world. The Board has set goals for the institutions about how many advisers—what you would call in K-12, counselors—how many of those are available to our students. The Board has set out goals that our institutions must budget towards each year. I think that is one good example. The other thing that part-time students require of us is both the time at which we offer courses and the modality. Is it in the building, or is it online? Those are challenges. We certainly learned in the pandemic that the system can be responsive in both of those arenas. I think there are programs in both those spaces that act as supports that are available by Board policy, and then attention to time and modality. I will also say I know this is not a money committee, but everywhere I go I talk about money because that is my job. Those things cost money, often those positions. In a time when budgets have been constrained, some institutions have shed those support positions. We seek to have those budgets restored. I think you will see positions being returned in that space, but it does require us to budget differently and to spend money differently. I think I will stop there and if somebody wants to rush forward and tell you what I just got wrong, I am happy to have them do that.

J. Kyle Dalpe, Ph.D., President, Western Nevada College:

I will give you an example from Western Nevada College. We have a program called ROADS [Realizing Opportunities for the American Dream to Succeed]. It is a program that was developed at the Northern Nevada Development Authority funded through the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation and now lives at Western Nevada College. What it allows us to do is provide funding for students to come in and get into a training program. It will do the traditional thing which is paying the fees, but it also allows us to help support that student with living expenses so they can stop out of a part-time job to spend the time in the classroom. That kind of program helps. We have one student who we use as a positive example that has gone through that program, was able to stop out of the workforce, go through this program. It paid the rent and then put him into the commercial driver's license program, and now he has a job making almost upwards of \$90,000 a year. We got a thank you note from his family saying thank you for making this happen because he was working two to three part-time jobs trying to make ends meet. That is one quick example of what we do.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

I think it is a conversation that we need to continue to have. I know I have had this conversation with UNLV President Whitfield many times, and I have been very impressed with some of the things that they were doing as well

Karin Hilgersom, President, Truckee Meadows Community College:

We have several programs that are designed to help students graduate relatively on time. These include the Men of Color program, and our Summer Bridge program, which has been very successful for over a decade. We have many scholarships, including scholarship donors. The Jacobs Foundation is the best one I can think of—a couple from back East who

love us so much. They give us a lot of money every year to fully fund workforce students. There are many, many others.

When you are talking about a 35-year-old part-time student with a job and a family, I think we need to rethink as a culture what "on time" truly means. If the student can make all that work, if they can continue to collect the salary, if they can continue to raise their families, if they continue to get their degrees at the same time, okay, it might take them a year or two longer, maybe that is okay. The part-time students are paying the same tuition as everyone else. I think the difficulty for a college like Truckee Meadows Community College, where most of our students are part-time, is that we are not funded by head count and yet we do have to provide and want to provide the wraparound student support services, including some of the programs I just mentioned, in order to help our part-time students succeed. I hope that is helpful.

[Assemblywoman Taylor assumed the Chair.]

Assemblywoman Mosca:

I had a question knowing that you used to be the superintendent of public instruction and now you are in this role, which I think is unique for many people. I would love to know two or three things that you are doing, or you would like to do to align the P-20 system. I did not see any data on first-generation students.

Dale Erquiaga:

Let me take the last part of your question first while I think a little bit. Yes, I will pull some first-generation data for you and will submit that to your staff. My apologies for that oversight. What are we doing, or what could we do in the P-20 space? I will say the thing I hear the most is about the numbers of people and that is how many folks can spend time from my side of that divide in K-12. How many people do we have? Not very many who could be available in middle school or in high school to talk about what enrollment looks like and what college looks like. That is a very personal sort of one-on-one connection. I have heard compelling stories from members of this body, how they ended up in one of my institutions because someone came to their high school, and so I think that is important. The institutions also, in addition to that direct outreach, have an increasing number of work-based or internship programs back and forth, like the dual enrollment work where they are accruing credits.

I think the challenge, and this is my opinion, having sat in both these jobs, the line is artificial in today's environment. The line between K-12 and postsecondary is old; it is antiquated. It is based on the German system. My title is Chancellor, for heaven's sakes. That has very little to do with young people's lives today. If I am done at Grade 10, I ought to be able to move on except my school is paid if I stay. When they move on to me, I am paid if I get them to take double credits, right? The way we fund our systems creates this divide, which was fine a century ago. Given the fluidity today and the economic needs today, I think it is a challenge. That is a challenge for all of us. A challenge for you as policymakers is to think about those disincentives that the funding mechanism creates.

I think as President Hilgersom has said, some of this is about wraparound supports so that as students do matriculate, they feel supported. The thing I have heard the most that students in the postsecondary space need that they did not get in the K-12 space is financial literacy, not algebra, but financial literacy. That is a partnership that we could probably do better at. There are many programs where colleges and universities are working in that K-12 space. I think the people on the ground do it; we do it well in career and technical education. We are not as good as when the money people like me get involved. It makes it harder to do that work.

[Assemblywoman Bilbray-Axelrod reassumed the Chair.]

Assemblywoman Hansen:

There are a couple of questions or insights I need as we talk about matriculation. I was looking at page 31 [page 31, [Exhibit E](#)], the yellow band of students who continued to postsecondary but not within the Nevada System of Higher Education. If you could give me an example: is that trade schools or something along those lines?

Dale Erquiaga:

It would be more like Touro University, one of the private universities, or like Western Governors University for example.

Assemblywoman Hansen:

For trade schools, we are not really tracking if the kids go into trades per se? I am just wondering if maybe some of the red might capture some of the kids where going into a university or college setting is not their deal, but they are going into trades, and I do not see that necessarily as a negative, and if they could have their own category.

Dale Erquiaga:

I will find out if trade schools or a trade apprenticeship work is in the green end or the yellow. It is probably in one of those places. I will ask the researchers.

Assemblywoman Hansen:

Along the lines of having concerns over kids not moving on to postsecondary, I am trying to think of what stumbling blocks might be in the way. I know that I read a book that was powerful called *The Trouble with Boys* by Peg Tyre. It came out in 2008. In this attempt to help our education system help females—and rightly so—we might have swung a little too far and we are leaving boys behind. I am curious, based on the stats I read there and I have watched, do we see that more girls are going to college than boys? Do we have those numbers? I did not know if you have a slide for that. I do not expect you to have it right there, but I would be interested. I think all of us would be interested to know about that in our worries about matriculation. What is the breakdown by gender, male to female? While we need to correct and make educational environments conducive for females, is there some overcorrection? Do we need to address the needs of males, particularly in elementary school? That is where I am thinking of it. I know you are not over that, but we are handing off these students and wondering about their proficiency while knowing that Nevada System

of Higher Education must handle a lot of remediation. Some of those numbers disturbed me. Is that creating a discouragement for some of those students? They might not feel so prepared, and they drop out because they are spending more time in college because they must remediate.

Dale Erquiaga:

If you look across our system for the last nine years, there are more females enrolled in higher education than there are males [page 40, [Exhibit E](#)]. The underlying data point that you have offered is correct. It is about 60 percent to 40 percent in our system. It has been in the 55 percent to 45 percent range but has remained at 60 percent to 40 percent for a while. I will give you the number one reason that showed up prior to the pandemic—it is during the pandemic, it is post-pandemic—it is money. What does it cost to go to college and university and what am I getting for that? It is the return-on-investment question. If I am accruing debt, when will I pay that debt off? If I have paid all this money, am I moving in an economic mobility manner? These are things that I have asked other legislators who asked me questions like this to consider. We, like K-12, stop our reporting at what we call completion. Here is our graduation rate and as the President has wisely said, even the old formula means less today than it used to, but then the question we ought to be concerned about as Nevadans and as policymakers is what happens after. Do I move economically? Am I employed and, as the Chair asked, am I employed in Nevada? Those metrics are hard to gather because of the way data systems work. Those are things that we could focus on to get at your other question.

I will tell you from what I do know about K-12 is, you are right. We begin to lose students as early as third or fifth grade. Certainly by middle school we lose more boys than we lose girls. You are going to see that move through the system. As we should have STEM [science, technology, engineering and math] programs for young women, there are probably programs about continuance for young men as well. Some of this is a family story. I always say I come from a family where my parents did not speak English. They were born in America; their brothers and sisters were not. Nonetheless I had that support. College was a conversation topic in my home. My father attended one year before the war. That is simply not true for many Nevada families, and that is on all of us to begin to introduce those programs, as you have heard some of my colleagues say, early in the school system so this is a possibility for all students.

Assemblywoman Taylor:

My question relates to pages 24 and 27 [[Exhibit E](#)]. You mentioned, and I like the way you coined it earlier, as opposed to achievement gaps, you called them performance gaps. I like that terminology because at the end of the day, it is about how they are performing and as you say, that puts the intention on the institution. On page 24 you pointed out that the system is a majority/minority system, then you go to page 27 and you see the almost corresponding increase in the students of color graduation rate. There is still a performance gap from a system standpoint. I do know that institutions work in terms of the areas of diversity equity, and inclusion (DEI). I am wondering from a system standpoint, are there system efforts that really look at not just getting students of color in? Our state is diversifying.

Some of that is going to happen because we look different as a state, as has been pointed out in various ways. How do we get them across the stage to completion?

Dale Erquiaga:

Yes, you are correct with everything you just said. I will give you a couple of examples of system initiatives in the DEI space. The Board itself has a committee that focuses on those issues, and it focuses on a range of topics in that space. There are programs on professional development in areas of antibias, anti-Semitism, and antiracism. We are, at a system level, trying to drive behavior into the institutions that makes us even more able to address the needs of all types of students. The Chancellor is also advised by a DEI council. We call it IDE, we have rearranged the letters. That council is made up of the diversity officers and virtually every campus has diversity staff.

I would put forward to you that the system and its institutions are very much attuned to how we act and how we show up. Even if we might not look like our students, it is important to their continuance and ultimate success; the Board does maintain the dashboard that my colleague Dr. Dalpe ran up here with, there are a whole bunch of dashboards on our website about persistence and completion. Some years ago the Board established a system of metrics that the institutions report quarterly to the Board about things like persistence, what I would call predictors of success and completion, and race and ethnicity is monitored there.

One of the other mechanisms that the Board uses that I have been really impressed with is our institutions all choose peer institutions. These are colleges and universities that are like them, but exist in other places. They also chose aspirational institutions they might aspire to be like, and our folks report on that data and show the Board how they are making progress in those areas. I do want you to know the institutions work hard on those performance gaps. The Board has that expectation that we ourselves continue to improve in that space.

Assemblyman D'Silva:

My question is pertaining to my constituents. I am a freshman in this Assembly. I just went to my freshman orientation. A big part of that was getting binders and binders full of data about our great state, and we got many links to great research that was put out there. One thing which profoundly impacted me was when I looked at the college education rate of the folks in my district, which is about 5 percent. The national average is closer to 27 percent. We are saying about 1 out of 20 people in my district has a college education compared to the American average, which is 1 out of 4.

I have a two-part question. Mr. Killian may be able to answer that question better. My question is, How do we assess who is a college-educated person in Nevada? Is it completion of a certain degree? Completion of certain credentials? Is it a certain credit requirement? My second question is, What about those areas in Las Vegas? I also saw similar data with Assembly District No. 6 and Assembly District No. 11. These are single digit numbers. My question is, What kind of outreach are we doing to up those numbers?

Asher Killian, Committee Counsel:

I may need to punt that question to our Research Division because I know they use certain data sources to develop those kinds of data sheets. I am just not sure what data source they use or what its rules are for that particular statistic, but I will look into that and get back to you.

Dale Erquiaga:

I will do the same. We count certificates, degrees, or awards. The data that is rolled up by the Department of Labor, that is the primary source; or the IPEDS [Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System] which is a national database in the education space. That is the primary source. There are rules just as the council has provided. All my research folks will work with your research folks to show you what that rule matrix looks like for how we report those. It is important to understand them. If you say college-educated, do you include certificates? Probably not, and yet many people benefit from six months or stackable credentials in employment.

Your other question is about outreach. I was asked the same question in the Senate, and my staff is pulling together some of the good work on outreach to either urban districts like yours or rural districts in the state where the numbers are upside down like yours. If you will allow me to complete that information request, I will not presume to speak for all of my institutions. We will bring you some data about our good outreach efforts.

My boss is approaching the table and has provided me a dashboard about what goes into the award types. This will be easy to provide to your Research Division.

Assemblywoman Torres:

I am really fascinated by dual enrollment programs. I think they are essential to get students matriculating from high school into the college and university systems. I see that we have data on the students from Nevada high schools that are matriculating into our colleges and universities. I am sure we can get data on the matriculation of the dual enrollment of students coming from a dual enrollment program into NSHE and what those numbers look like in comparison to their peers who are not in a dual enrollment program.

Dale Erquiaga:

This is the sweet spot of research for me. We will get you what we have, but the area that we should all be looking at is, Is there a difference? I will tell you nationally, there is a difference. They do matriculate at a higher rate, and then we ought look at performance, persistence, and completion. We are beginning to pull some of that data. Some of the data I may have to commission some research over, but what we have I will share, and it is exactly the right question to be asking.

Assemblywoman Torres:

If you can get us research on the demographics of dual enrollment students too. I know that is something that you will be able to get us. I want to take a look and see if the dual enrolled students that we are serving look like the student populations that we have in the districts.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

Please get that to the Committee and we will get it out to everyone.

Assemblywoman Anderson:

Before I ask you questions about that, I want to say how much I appreciate your entire staff always being willing to work. One of those fee waivers is mine that I am always pushing for. I have three questions, but I will only ask two. One has to do with page 9 [[Exhibit E](#)] and it is the employee distribution classification. You lumped together the academic and administrative faculty, and understandably so, based upon trying to get everything in there. I am wondering if you could provide to the Committee at a later time what that breakdown is. How many academic individuals are working with students on a daily basis as lecturers and as teachers, and how many are actually leading research instead? That is academic, but they are not always lecturers. And then, how many administrative faculty, because that is a big difference. Also the technology support people, if you could break that down a little bit more because that is a large concern.

The other item comes from pages 43 and 44. It appears that our schools, whether it is our two Tier 1 universities or our community colleges, are a great bargain. When you compare them to the other schools that are in the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), they are a great bargain. Is this only tuition or is this the other fees that students are expected to unfortunately pay? I noticed that at the bottom, it says it does not include course-specific fees, but is there a way for us to get a list from each institute of all the additional fees that our students are expected to pay? What I am hearing from students is tuition, per credit, is a great bang for the buck. But there are so many other things.

Dale Erquiaga:

To your first question, yes, I have been asked the question to disaggregate by employee type. I would also say to you, when we disaggregate, please do not think of administrative faculty as administrators. They might be classified as a student-support person. They are what we call administrative faculties, so we will disaggregate data. We have that request. For the second, with me is Interim Vice Chancellor Renee Davis. She could tell you better than I. I think this number is base fees only, but she will clarify that. Then yes, the Board has been asking us a lot of questions about all those additional student fees. They do add up. We charge course fees, lab fees, and differential fees that are different. How we are transparent about that has been a request from the Board and so we will gather that information, but I will ask if Ms. Davis wants to add to that.

Renee Davis, Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs and Community Colleges, Nevada System of Higher Education:

The numbers on the slides do include what we refer to as mandatory fees charged to all students. It is not something like parking fees, it is not housing, but there are fees at the universities, counseling fees or those types of fees. Those are all rolled into that total. That is true for all the states that report to WICHE. But you are right, aside from those fees that you mentioned in the footnote, there are no lab fees. There are other fees that students pay depending upon what specific courses or programs they are enrolled in. It is not the whole picture, but it is more than just the registration fees. It gets you partway there.

Dale Erquiaga:

Yes, we are a bargain with where our student fees are, and we are very proud of that. Student fees are used to compensate for low state funding. I use that term "low," as two-thirds of the money comes from the state, one-third comes from the students. If costs go up and the state appropriation does not go up, the fees do—just to understand how the business model works.

DeRionne Pollard, President, Nevada State College:

I love the question that Assemblywoman Torres pointed out because I think that is the exact data that we should be looking at—not just the number of high school students who are participating in dual credit, but those who move on into the four-year institution or the two-year institution. At Nevada State College, what I can offer is that nearly 14 percent of students who participate in our dual credit programs move on to become students at Nevada State College. We are very excited to watch as they matriculate on through completion. The other thing which is very important is that these students look like the students who are in high school and the communities that we serve. At our own institution in Nevada State, we are able to track this across our mission. We look at this in terms of ethnicity: 62 percent of our students who participate in dual credit identify as Hispanic of any race. We have white students at 10 percent, Asian students at 11 percent, and two or more at 9 percent. We look at first generation: over half of the students who participate in dual credit at Nevada State are first generation. Then we also look at income—low income: over half of these students are Pell Grant-eligible, which is the moniker we use to recognize students who fall into this population. I really appreciate the question of looking not only at those who are enrolling in dual credit programs, but who are matriculating into the four- or two-year institution and then who are representative of the student bodies that we hope to see attending higher education.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

Are there any other questions? Thank you very much for being here. That was a great presentation. We will continue to have very robust conversations over the next 103 days.

Dale Erquiaga:

Thank you, Madam Chair and members of the Committee. I just want to give kudos, as you have, to my staff and to my many colleagues. I am the temporary face here, but the folks who do this work on behalf of those 105,000 Nevadans are behind me and we all owe them our thanks.

Chair Bilbray-Axelrod:

With that, we will close the presentation and then we will go to our final agenda item which is public comment. [There was none.] Our next meeting will be Tuesday, February 28 at 1:30 p.m. That concludes our meeting for the day. Please be careful going home everyone. It is getting treacherous out there, and this meeting is adjourned [at 3:06 p.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Funmi Shetty
Recording Committee Secretary

Spencer Wines
Transcribing Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Assemblywoman Shannon Bilbray-Axelrod, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBITS

[Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda.

[Exhibit B](#) is the Attendance Roster.

[Exhibit C](#) is a proposed amendment to [Assembly Bill 74](#), presented by Dale A. R. Erquiaga, Acting Chancellor, Nevada System of Higher Education.

[Exhibit D](#) is a proposed amendment to [Assembly Bill 74](#), submitted by Vince Saavedra, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, Southern Nevada Building Trades Unions.

[Exhibit E](#) is a copy of a PowerPoint presentation titled "State of Higher Education: System Overview," dated February 23, 2023, presented by Dale A. R. Erquiaga, Acting Chancellor, Nevada System of Higher Education.