

What's Next Nevada? Phase II: Working Action Plan

Introduction

The What's Next Nevada? Project was originally developed to bring the Nevada community together to address the ongoing teacher shortage impacting students across the state. In Phase I, our Advisory Group met several times over the course of five months to identify and prioritize recommendations that would alleviate the shortage and the deleterious effect it has on student achievement.

Through this discussion, it was determined that recommendations would need to address the short-term need for more teachers and the long term need to repair the structural flaws that got us here in the first place. Therefore, the recommendations address both programmatic changes that will impact in the short term, and systemic changes that will influence practice for years to come.

Phase I produced five recommendations. They were prioritized in the following order:

- 1. Design a specific career ladder for the teaching profession and outline specific concomitant changes to teacher standards, certifications, and compensation.**
- 2. The legislature provide the resources for and task the Nevada Department of Education with redesigning the principal talent management system in a way that aligns principal recruitment, certification, supervision, professional development, support, and evaluation, and that holds principals accountable for specific performance and achievement outcomes.**
- 3. Assess the degree to which schools are creating positive climates and high performance cultures and to support building leaders, principal supervisors, and appropriate district executives in the improvement of school climate and culture.**
- 4. Expand the two-year Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) system for new teachers and teachers new to the districts.**
- 5. Create statewide U-Teach program for STEM education**

Phase II of What's Next Nevada? was designed to develop an action plan, or road map, that will serve to guide our community in implementing the Phase I recommendations. The work in this phase consisted of a rigorous evaluation of the current state of affairs relative to each recommendation, an analysis of the tools that might already exist to help in our work, an analysis of what new tools will or might need to be "built" and an action plan for implementing the recommendations.

What is interesting about the Phase I recommendations is that all of them focus on teachers and administrators as the means by which to improve overall student achievement. Nevada Succeeds wholeheartedly believes that if Nevada supports and helps to facilitate increased professionalism through the development and nurturing of the human talent within the pre-K-12 education system, we will not only see increased student outcomes, we will attract and retain high-quality professionals for years to come and ensure we have the sustained ability to give our students a world class education. Focusing on and investing in our human talent also makes sense financially because Nevada spends nearly 90% of education dollars on people. We will not improve education outcomes unless we support and nurture our main investment – our teachers, principals, education support professionals (ESPs), and other licensed personnel. It is important to be very careful here in stating this, however. Nevada Succeeds believes students and children should always be the main focus of our education system and its goals, but we also believe that to *ensure* that students remain the focus, we have a duty to support those who are entrusted with educating them. The following systemic approach to education reform in Nevada will fundamentally shift the trajectory of our students for generations to come.

Recommendation 1. Design a specific career ladder (matrix) for the teaching profession and outline specific concomitant changes to teacher standards, certifications, and compensation.

(Nevada Succeeds has renamed the career ladder term from Phase I to the term “career matrix” to help further highlight teaching as a dynamic, multi-faceted profession).

Evaluation of current state of affairs

Nevada’s two largest school districts have implemented professional growth systems (PGS) for teachers. These systems are working toward the alignment of standards, certifications and compensation. These efforts will help guide the development of a career matrix that encourages the kind of systemic professionalism among teachers that is needed to increase student achievement long term.

The Clark County Education Association (CCEA) in partnership with Clark County School District (CCSD) has begun to develop a PGS that includes the option for teachers to participate in individual development of a Professional Growth Plan (PGP). This PGP allows teachers to choose professional development options based on two broad categories that will be financially compensated and professionally recognized. The are two main types of professional growth options teachers may choose to participate in are 1) growth opportunities that are needed in the individual school in which a teacher works and/or 2) in an area in which they personally need to improve their teaching practice.

The PGP/PGS system in Clark County provides both targeted professional development opportunities as well as the financial incentives to improve in a professionally meaningful way and encourages teachers to develop a plan that will align with their NEPF goals or

professional goals. A PGP is developed between an individual teacher and a school principal or administrator.

The PGP in Clark County provides an alternative to the traditional step and ladder system of salary increases based on years of experience and attainment of advanced degrees by giving teachers the option and incentives to target professional development to specific areas of their practice and then valuing that through salary increases. The PGP also provides the opportunity for teachers to specialize their teaching practice by providing a teacher leadership role, called the Master Practitioner. The Master Practitioner role is still being designed, but it will be designed to allow a veteran teacher who wants to take on more responsibility and leadership to do so while still working in the classroom.

Washoe County School District (WCSD) also has a PGS that provides targeted professional development and support of teachers, specifically teachers new to the district. WCSD provides an onboarding program to support all newly hired teachers in the district. This program consists of the Mentor Teacher Program as well as a program called the New Teacher Academy. WCSD also has a program called the Induction and Mentoring Program, which “serves to bridge the gap between initial preparation and the realities of teaching.”¹

The Mentoring and Induction Program consists of the Mentor Teacher Program and the New Teacher Academy, and all new or newly hired teachers must participate, unless their principal exempts them. The Mentor Teacher Program pairs a trained Consulting Teacher with each teacher in his or her first or second year. This Consulting Teacher helps guide new teachers in the district so that they can be most effective in the classroom. The New Teacher Academy provides essential professional development aimed at meeting the needs of newly hired teachers. WCSD also offers ongoing professional development for veteran teachers as well as ESPs. For veteran teachers, WCSD offers Professional Development Cafes where teachers can go to sessions to engage in various types of professional development activities.¹

The research process of Phase II coincided with the ongoing implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), which is the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Under ESSA, states now have more authority and autonomy to decide components of their accountability and assessment systems than they did under the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act. The Nevada Department of Education has convened a group of stakeholders from across the state to form an ESSA Advisory Group to consult on the development of a renewed state education plan. The Advisory Group will be informed by recommendations from ESSA workgroups and will outline a revised state education plan that accounts for the changes made possible by the ESSA. Nevada Succeeds participates in and advises the workgroups and advisory group meetings to ensure that the goals of the Phase I WNN? recommendations are taken into consideration and ultimately implemented where appropriate.

¹ WCSD Website - <http://www.washoeschools.net/Page/814>

Analysis of current tools and Action Plan

The Professional Growth Systems, in both Clark County and Washoe County, and PGP options in Clark County are good steps in the direction of systemically professionalizing teaching in Nevada in that they are encouraging teachers to take ownership of their practice and to think of part of their job as a continual pursuit of targeted and meaningful improvement. This is a key hallmark of what has helped to professionalize other industries and to produce positive outcomes in doing so.

Teaching is, at its core, a human-centric field. If we look at another very human-centric field, nursing, we can glean quite a bit about how and where the teaching profession could be improved in a way that could attract and retain well-qualified professionals.

The nursing field is structured in a way that accounts for the varying and valuable skills the professionals within it possess. For instance, the nursing field encompasses registered nurses (RNs), those who have either an associate's degree or a bachelor's degree, though most RN's in the coming years will be required to have a bachelor's. The field is significantly more complex than just one type of professional, however. The nursing field also encompasses certified nursing assistants (CNAs), licensed practical nurses (LPNs), nurse practitioners (NPs), certified nurse midwives (CNMs), certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs), and others. Among all of these types of nurses, some are required to complete a certificate program, as with CNAs, but several other types of nurses are required to have a master's degree or even a doctorate. Their responsibility and expertise is varied and their professional responsibilities, authority, and salary reflect that. Yet, all are types of nurses. They are all also nurses who interact with patients, albeit in different capacities for different purposes.

If all Nevada school districts develop a robust Professional Growth Plan, one that gives teaching professionals a kind of course catalogue of professional options and trajectories that allows for specialization and expertise (as used in Washoe County), we believe Nevada will not only see greater teacher retention and recruitment, but will see increased student achievement overall.

The PGP/PGS system in Clark County provides both targeted professional development opportunities as well as the financial incentives to improve in a professionally meaningful way. By being an optional system, it does lack some mechanisms to ensure all teachers are in constant pursuit of meaningful improvement. If teachers may "opt in," the opportunity to create a system where excellent teaching practice is the professional norm and expectation is somewhat lost. By making the PGP a non-optional system and further designing roles such as Master Practitioner, English Language Learner Specialist, Special Education Professional, and other needed specialized roles, the concept of a true career matrix can flourish. By creating differentiated roles in teaching and then designing a

professional growth pathway and compensation schedule to achieve those roles, the goal of creating meaningful career progression will be attained.

The PGS System in Washoe County has been in place longer than the current model being used in Clark County. In regard to teacher leaders, like what Clark County will develop into the Master Practitioner, WCSD has developed a system through which teachers who want to develop into a teacher leader can enter. WCSD has created what the district calls a Teacher Leadership Pool, where teachers submit to an application, go through an interview process and then, if selected, have the primary job of building “capacity with their colleagues by providing technical assistance to teachers in regard to Nevada Academic Standards, pedagogical skill, educational research, lesson design, modeling, lesson critique, lesson coaching, classroom management, and parental engagement efforts.”²

Action Item #1: In order to support the development of a career matrix and encourage the further refining and improvement of the professional growth plans in the state, Nevada Succeeds will facilitate discussions among and with teachers, administrators, education support professionals, and other licensed personnel to share relevant best practices from other career fields’ efforts toward professionalization, and will provide a platform for organic dialogue about the needs of teachers within the education profession. Nevada Succeeds knows that the best outcomes for the advancement of any profession come when the professionals in the field are empowered to define excellence in their own profession. For this reason, the majority of the work to create meaningful career progression for teachers through the development of a career matrix is work that must be done at the district level through a collaborative effort of education professionals working together to shape the trajectory of their industry. We are sensitive to the sentiments in the education community that for several years, through the actions of both state and national movements, many teachers feel that their profession has had a lot of things done to it, not for it or within it. We also recognize that in order to ensure we have high achieving students who can excel in college and careers, we must have the best educators teaching them. For this reason, Nevada Succeeds has already begun to work (and will continue to work) as a facilitator to bring unions, school districts, university representatives, and other education professionals together to design a career matrix system of teaching standards and expectations that is also supported by robust professional growth opportunities and aligned with the current NEPF. If, during the process of building the career matrices, it becomes apparent that components of the NEPF need to be changed Nevada Succeeds will advocate to the appropriate body for those changes.

(Nevada Succeeds is implementing a similar approach to the one described above in Action Item # 1 to align the principal talent management system. This will be discussed in the Recommendation 2 section.)

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<http://www.washoeschools.net/cms/lib08/NV01912265/Centricity/Domain/243/Summary%20document.pdf>

Action Item # 2: Nevada Succeeds is also working with education support professionals' unions, specifically with teachers' aide professionals to develop a professional growth plan and career matrix to ensure that every professional in our classrooms is trained to help support students and teachers effectively. Phase II of WNN? allowed for a deeper look into the demands of teaching and what is involved in not only accomplishing, but accomplishing well, all of the duties that teachers have. Teachers are entrusted with educating our students, planning for instruction time, evaluating students, mentoring students, working on their own professional development, engaging parents (in phone calls, emails, meetings, etc.) and many other things. In taking a deeper dive into all of the things teachers must do to and are tasked with doing, Nevada Succeeds began asking what would help teachers be able to maximize their time and expertise in teaching. Some of the information collected stated that if teachers were able to have *good* teachers' aides, they could be more effective. There is a wide range of what teachers' aides do, and are trained and capable of doing. This means some teachers get proficient aides and some don't. For this reason, in addition to developing and facilitating professional growth and development opportunities for classroom teachers, we believe that the success of teachers can be buttressed by the type and level of professional support they receive in the classroom.

In the same way we will continue to work with teachers, teachers' unions, administrators and administrators' unions to facilitate the development of a robust PGS system, we will work with education support professionals, specifically teachers' aides and their unions to ensure that the level of professionalism and talent in all of our schools is working toward the same goal: optimizing and supporting human talent to ensure each child receives the best education. We know from conversations and research that much of what is considered part of a teacher's normal day is work that could be delegated so that she or he could utilize her or his talents and skills in educational delivery and engagement more effectively. Ensuring that teachers have a well-trained and qualified professional to which to delegate tasks and who can help augment instructional needs is critical to whether or not the support being given is useful.

Action Item # 3: Nevada Succeeds is working (and will continue to work) within the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) workgroups and Advisory Group facilitated by the Nevada Department of Education. The ESSA process is continually evolving at the state and national level as guidance from the federal Department of Education on its implementation has not been fully developed yet. That said, we do believe there may be an opportunity to use some of the funding in Title II-A of ESSA to help support the development and implementation of the career matrix/PGP expansion. We will work in partnership with districts and the Nevada Department of Education to pursue this possibility.

Action Item # 4: Nevada Succeeds will draft legislative initiatives to encourage and incentivize further reimbursement funding for teachers who go through the National Board Certification process. Nevada Succeeds believes that National Board Certification

of teachers is a model for the type of competencies teachers need to possess as professional educators. Currently the State of Nevada provides reimbursement funding for 32 teachers who go through National Board Certification each year. As of last year, Nevada had 635 Nationally Board Certified teachers statewide. This year, approximately 600 teachers are going through the certification process.

Action Item # 5: Nevada Succeeds will support legislation and regulatory change to teacher licensing and credentialing requirements that result from differentiated role/position development within the career matrices developed for teachers and education support professionals. There will likely be a need to develop new state guidelines for the roles developed by creating new educator career matrices. While these roles are not yet known, Nevada Succeeds will work to advocate for appropriate changes in Nevada statute and regulations to accommodate and standardize these roles once developed.

Recommendation 2. The legislature provide the resources for and task the Nevada Department of Education with redesigning the principal talent management system in a way that aligns principal recruitment, certification, supervision, professional development, support, and evaluation, and that holds principals accountable for specific performance and achievement outcomes.

(The entire Phase II process has led us to conclude that this top down approach of aligning the principal talent management system with the Nevada Department of Education telling principals and administrators how their professional career and development system should be aligned is not the most effective approach to ensuring Nevada has effective principals and administrators. Instead we believe that a collaborative approach of engaging the professionals to define excellence as standard and working with the department to codify standards of excellence will be most effective.)

Evaluation of current state of affairs

There are several principal development and preparation programs in Nevada. The Public Education Foundation houses the Leadership Institute of Nevada, which works to equip school trustees, superintendents, principals, and central office administrators with leadership and human talent optimization skills needed to effectively lead Nevada's (specifically Clark County's) schools.

The University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV) offers the Educational Policy and Leadership Program. This program recently moved to the College of Education from the College of Urban Affairs. This principal and administrator development program "is grounded in the belief that PK-12 educational leaders must work alongside other community institutions, including government agencies, non-profit organizations, and business and industry, for the well-being of our community's students and families."³

³ <http://education.unlv.edu/ephe/programs/med-education-policy-leadership/>

The University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) also offers an education leadership program that prepares teachers to become principals and administrators in Nevada's K-12 education system. The programs offered at UNR are M.Ed. as well as Ed.D degree programs.

Nevada has implemented a performance evaluation framework and rubric for principals and administrators within the Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF). The NEPF evaluates much of what has been shown to be most impactful in encouraging and producing both teacher effectiveness as well as student achievement. That said, there is still significant room for Nevada to develop systems that will ensure we have administrators who are capable of leading teachers and students to excellence in instruction and learning respectively.

The State Board of Education has approved the development of a performance evaluation framework for principal and administrator supervisors. This framework will be developed through the Teachers and Leaders Council within the Department of Education. This evaluation system will be aligned with the NEPF for principals and administrators.

Nevada Succeeds believes that the NEPF rubric for both instructional leadership standards and indicators as well as professional responsibilities standards and indicators for principals and administrators signals the correct and appropriate aligned priorities for what the state recognizes as necessary administrator skills and competencies.

The passage of AB 394 in the 2015 legislative session called for the reorganization of Clark County School District into individual autonomous school precincts. The implementation of AB 394 now, more than ever, emphasizes the importance of strong leadership capabilities among principals and administrators. Currently the majority of principals and administrators in CCSD are not equipped with all of the necessary leadership and management skills that will be required to lead both buildings and teachers to maximum student achievement. For this reason, principals and administrators will be receiving initial and ongoing professional development that will help cultivate and further develop the skills, knowledge and capabilities that will be necessary for success.

Nevada Succeeds believes that the rollout of AB 394 presents Clark County with a unique opportunity to develop administrators who are strong leaders. Data shows that administrators and principals have the ability to set the tone (establish expectations for teachers and students) for the school. Studies show that one of the strongest indicators for cultivating the type of climate and culture that fosters high student achievement is the leadership and direction provided by the principal and/or administrator of a school.

Again, the research process of Phase II coincided with ongoing implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and Nevada Succeeds participates in and advises the workgroups and advisory group meetings to ensure that the goals of the Phase I WNN? recommendations are taken into consideration and ultimately implemented where appropriate.

Analysis of current tools and Action Plan

While the initial recommendation from Phase I of WNN? was to look to the Nevada Department of Education to redesign the principal talent management system and also provide the resources to do so, after further research, Nevada Succeeds is recommending that other levers be used to align this system. The Nevada Department of Education, specifically through the work of the Teachers and Leaders Council, has made significant strides in this effort already. By approving the implementation of principal and administrator supervisor NEPF standards that are aligned with both NEPF standards for teachers and administrators, the state effectively aligned standards and signaled what it values in principal and administrator leadership. It is now up to districts to provide the professional development opportunities that give administrators the ability to succeed in their evaluations. It is also up to principal and administrator programs to ensure they are preparing these professionals to succeed under the evaluation frameworks as well.

In order to further and completely align standards for principals in the state of Nevada, two things need to happen. First, the principal preparation programs in the state need to be preparing principals to operate and, possibly more importantly, lead teachers and other education professionals in a way that allows them to maximize their human talent and that cultivates positive school climates and high achieving school cultures. Second, the development of a professional growth system (PGS) for administrators needs to happen in each district. This will allow principals and administrators, as it will teachers, to grow and improve in ways that will both benefit their professional practice as well as benefit the school in which they are working. This PGS will need to be developed in a way that aligns with the NEPF standards for principals and administrators. In addition, it must also align with the corresponding teacher and education support professionals' systems so that each type of professional is working to grow individually while doing so in way that supports the other professionals in the school building.

We cannot simply implement a performance framework for principals and administrators and not provide the necessary systemic professional development needed to ensure these professionals are able to successfully lead our schools. The following action items identify a plan to ensure that happens.

Action Item # 1: Nevada Succeeds will work with administrators' unions, the Public Education Foundation, other principal preparation programs, leadership consultants, and groups of principals to develop both a professional growth plan for principals and administrators in each district as well as a redefined career matrix to ensure that principals, administrators, and administrator supervisors are trained to effectively support teachers as well as develop the ability to most effectively use their human talent. Just as it is important to provide teachers with robust and meaningful professional development that is aligned with professional advancement and specialization opportunities, it is also important for administrators. By working together and collaboratively to develop professional growth systems for principals and administrators

at the same time as teachers and education support professionals, we will increase the likelihood that the resulting systems will be aligned and supporting the same goals – investing in our human talent so that our students have the best possible education.

Action Item # 2: Just as in Recommendation 1, Nevada Succeeds is working (and will continue to work) within the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) workgroups and Advisory Group facilitated by the Nevada Department of Education. Nevada Succeeds is sits on the Teaching and Leading Workgroup and has been able to contribute to and augment the discussion

Action Item # 3: Nevada Succeeds will support legislation and regulatory change to teacher licensing and credentialing requirements that result from differentiated role/position development within the career matrices developed for principals and administrators. There will likely be a need to develop new state guidelines for the roles developed by creating new principal and administrator career matrices. While these roles are not yet known, Nevada Succeeds will work to advocate for appropriate changes in Nevada statute and regulations to accommodate and standardize these roles once developed.

Recommendation 3. Assess the degree to which schools are creating positive climates and high performance cultures and to support building leaders, principal supervisors, and appropriate district executives in the improvement of school climate and culture.

Evaluation of current state of affairs

Currently in Nevada, there is very little in place to encourage systemic positive climates and high performing school cultures. In fact, many people use the terms climate and culture interchangeably, a problem that signals the general misunderstanding of important nuanced differences. That said, the NEPF in its standards and indicators components, does contain evaluative framework for how teachers and administrators are encouraging high achieving school cultures. Many of the teachers and administrators who excel in our education culture and climate do so in spite of the system instead of because of it. We must change that by maximizing each person in our schools and using the wealth of human talent to which we have access.

The ability to cultivate the desired climate and culture within our schools can be traced back to the leadership, both teacher and principal/administrator in each school. This is why achieving the desired climate and culture in all of Nevada’s public schools will only be realized if we help encourage systemic professionalism that values and develops the activities to cultivate it

Analysis of current tools and Action Pan

Climate and culture in our education system determines much of the success our students either achieve or don't achieve, and in order create a system that collectively values positive school climates and high performing school cultures, we must 1) create a system where educators are valued, supported daily, and given professional growth support to succeed, and 2) use assessment indicators that have been shown to give us information about climate and culture.

The Nevada School Performance Framework (NSPF) gives teachers and administrators information on what are considered lagging indicators about the climate and culture of their school. A lagging indicator is essentially a report about how the school performed in the past. It says very little about what/how the school is doing in a present moment. This is an important distinction. Climate and culture data from a year prior cannot be adjusted or improved for present needs of a school. Given frequently changing staff and student dynamics, often particularly and disproportionately in our lowest performing schools, this is a key point.

Action Item # 1: Just as in Recommendations 1 & 2, Nevada Succeeds is working (and will continue to work) within the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) workgroups and Advisory Group facilitated by the Nevada Department of Education. With the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, now called the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), states now have more authority and autonomy to decide components of their accountability and assessment systems than they did under the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). The Nevada Department of Education has convened a group of stakeholders from across the state to form an ESSA Advisory Group to consult on the development of a renewed state education plan. The Advisory Group will be informed by recommendations from ESSA workgroups and will outline a revised state education plan that accounts for the changes made possible by the ESSA. Nevada Succeeds participates in and advises the workgroups and advisory group meetings to ensure that the goals of the Phase I WNN? recommendations are taken into consideration and ultimately implemented where appropriate.

Action Item # 2: Nevada Succeeds will work through the Advisory Task Force for Educator Professional Development to ensure training on how to cultivate a positive school climate and high achieving school culture is incorporated into recommendations for state standards. This task force recently decided to recommend to the State Board of Education the adoption of the Learning Forward Standards for professional learning, which provide a framework “the characteristics of professional learning that leads to effective teaching practices, supportive leadership, and improved student results.”⁴ Nevada Succeeds supports this recommendation and will continue to advocate for efforts that support the cultivation of improved climate and culture in our schools.

⁴ <https://learningforward.org/standards-for-professional-learning>

Action Item # 3: Nevada Succeeds will advocate that climate and culture assessments be incorporated as part of the development and responsibilities of teachers and administrators in the newly designed career matrix and professional growth plans. The assessment of climate and culture will happen organically and often throughout the process of building each PGP and career matrix continuum. Part of teaching and administrative leadership practice should include ongoing assessments of climate and culture.

Action Item # 4: Continue to work with CCSD to develop and refine leadership training that was initiated for principals and administrators with the implementation of AB 394. CCSD is in the process of training and developing the initial administrative and principal staff on how and what will be needed to operate effectively in the newly reorganized school district. Nevada Succeeds believes that the overall effectiveness of the reorganization will be determined by whether or not CCSD has the leadership capacity to truly support teachers and effectively manage building resources. For this reason, Nevada Succeeds has worked and will continue to work with CCSD and other community partners to ensure the training of leaders is effective and adhering to the legislative intent of making all of our schools high performing environments where students are able to excel.

Recommendation 4. Expand the two-year Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) system for new teachers and teachers new to the districts.

Evaluation of current state of affairs

Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) was implemented in Clark County for the first time in the 2014-2015 school year after the passage of SB 407 in the 2013 state legislative session. The program received renewed funding in the 2015 session but is still not available to each teacher who might need it. PAR has also been implemented in Washoe County School District with funding from the Teacher Incentive Grant through the U.S. Department of Education. In WCSD, PAR is available to any teacher who meets the specified criteria. Though the development of PAR in Washoe County was funded through a grant, the program is now fully integrated into the district's budget.

Analysis of current tools

The effectiveness of PAR in helping teachers who are in need, both novice and veteran, has been shown across multiple research projects nationwide. PAR has been shown to increase both overall student achievement as well as teacher retention. PAR is also not a new program and has been used in various parts of the country for more than 20 years.

Analysis of tools that need to be built

The success of PAR in supporting new teachers and teachers who need assistance is crucial for reasons in addition to those stated above. One of those reasons is that PAR

signals the recognition by the district that new teachers, specifically and understandably, need help transitioning from a teacher preparation into a classroom setting. The concept of PAR is not unlike that of a residency or fellowship program for physicians and some other medical and healthcare providers. It makes sense to provide transition support for novice teachers, and even those who aren't so novice, to ensure our school system is developing and retaining the human talent we have.

Action Plan

Action Item #1: Nevada Succeeds will continue to work with our legislative and district level partners to advocate for action that supports funding to establish/make available PAR in each district or school that doesn't already have it and wants it. Nevada Succeeds believes that the mentorship, professional development, and coaching components of PAR will ultimately be incorporated in the career matrices developed for teachers. Unless and until this happens, we also do not believe that we can wait on the development of the new career matrix/PGP model to be in effect. For this reason, we will and are working to ensure there is adequate funding for PAR statewide.

Recommendation 5. Create statewide U-Teach program for STEM education

Evaluation of current state of affairs

Nevada Succeeds is working with the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), the University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV), and Nevada State College (NSC) to expand the existing work at each institution that is aligned with the goals of a U-Teach adaptation program. While UNR has fully implemented a U-Teach adaptation program, UNLV is in the process of implementing a program that seeks to accomplish the same goals of a formal U-Teach adaptation program but that approaches the student recruitment slightly differently.

Instead of targeting students who will graduate with Bachelors of Science degrees in their fields, UNLV is working to target students who will be eligible to receive a Bachelor of Arts degree in their field, as this will allow them enough time to also complete the college of education requirements for a teaching degree at the same time they pursue a degree in their chosen STEM field.

NSC has not implemented a U-Teach adaptation but has begun the process of exploring what steps need to be taken to do so. UNLV, UNR, and NSC met on September 1st to begin discussions of best practices at UNR and UNLV in each of their efforts toward the goals of producing more teachers who are highly qualified to teach STEM subjects in Nevada's K-12 public education system. One of the main goals of the meeting was to help NSC in its progress toward developing a system that will also help augment STEM teachers in Nevada by learning more about the approaches from the other two universities.

Analysis of current tools

UNLV, UNR, and NSC are all committed to implementing programs that attract more teachers who are educated in STEM fields. Both Dean Metcalf at UNLV's College of Education and Provost Carman at UNR have experience with implementing U-Teach at other universities. They had very different takeaways as to the effectiveness of the program.

Analysis of tools that need to be built and Action Plan

Nevada State College has not yet begun developing either an application for a UTeach adaptation program or an alternative/modified program with the same goals, like that at UNLV. That said, NSC is in discussion with both UNLV and UNR to begin the process of that development.

Action Item # 1: Nevada Succeeds is facilitating discussions among all three schools to ensure that each school has the opportunity to share best practices and lessons learned. This is important from both an academics development perspective as well as university and college political perspective. Changes to faculty structure and degree trajectory with the implementation of a UTeach or UTeach-like program involves some curriculum modification that has to be agreed to by the individual colleges granting the degrees.

Action Item #2: Nevada Succeeds will coordinate with representatives from UNLV, UNR, and Nevada State College to advocate for the legislature to approve funding for U-Teach implementation for each college and university that chooses to implement and augment the programs at each school. Nevada Succeeds recognizes that the overall success of such a program is contingent on not only the funding but also its ability to meet the needs of the students and garner the support of the faculty. This is part of the reason why we support the autonomy of each school to decide what approach to encouraging STEM students to go into teaching is best for its respective institution.

Phase II Action Plan Conclusion

Phase II of What's Next Nevada? has given Nevada Succeeds a renewed and targeted focus on the work that must be done in Nevada's public education system. We believe this work will focus on ensuring that our human talent is effectively supported and optimized while also ensuring the people who are teaching our students are professional and in constant pursuit of growth and improvement. Nevada Succeeds will continue to identify, and work toward resolving, the systemic and programmatic barriers to student achievement through the critical lens of how we shape and encourage a teaching workforce that is effective, supported, respected, and rivaled as a model for student success outcomes.