

EXHIBIT K

EXHIBIT K



STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

1749 North Stewart Street Suite 40
Carson City, Nevada 89706-2543
(775) 687 - 9174 · Fax: (775) 687 - 9113

BRIEFING MEMORANDUM

TO: SPCSA Board
FROM: Patrick Gavin
SUBJECT: Nevada Virtual High Stakes Review
DATE: February 22, 2016

Background:

The Authority imposed the High Stakes Review of Nevada Virtual Academy as part of its renewal of the school at the June 21, 2013 Board Meeting. At that Board meeting, the Board acted on the following staff recommendation:

1. *Make clear that this hearing serves as formal notice to Nevada Virtual Academy that the school's academic and financial performance are below the Authority's expectation;*
2. *The Charter Contract resulting from renewal of the charter shall include the following provisions specific to Nevada Virtual Academy;*
 - a. *The Governing Body must operate at all times within available revenues with no future credit accommodations from its chosen EMO; and*
 - b. *In consideration of the academic performance, a cap shall be placed upon Nevada Virtual's student enrollment that is equal to the lesser of the audited actuals from Count Day 2013 or the pupil count at Count Day 2014. The cap shall be a material term and condition within the Charter Contract.*
3. *Direct Authority Staff to conduct a high stakes review of Nevada Virtual's performance, against the Authority's expectations, and report findings and recommendations to the Authority Board that may include contract termination due to persistent underperformance or material breach of the terms and conditions of the charter contract, or a return to good standing. The review and recommendation(s) shall be presented to the Authority Board in Fall 2015, at which point Nevada Virtual must demonstrate substantial progress towards meeting the Authority's academic performance expectations.*
 - a. *Substantial progress will be based on the school's aggregate academic performance based on the Authority's academic indicators that will result in closing the gap between baseline (SY12/13) performance and "Adequate", as described in the performance framework within three years. It is important to note that the presence of the high stakes review does not interfere with the Authority's ability to take action prior to Fall 2015.*

Pursuant to AB205 of the 2013 Legislative session, the State Public Charter School Authority also adopted the performance framework at the June 21, 2013 Board meeting. The performance framework is incorporated into each school’s charter contract. The Authority’s academic framework, which was designed based on extensive consultation with schools, balances both a school’s absolute performance and its academic gains on high stakes assessments mandated by NDE and the Authority. The framework incorporates six levels of performance, ranging from Critical to Exceptional. As noted above, the Board’s directive to conduct a High Stakes Review defined “substantial progress” as closing the gap between the school’s achievement level based on the 2012-13 framework and whether the school attained a rating of Adequate within three years.

Designation
Exceptional
Exceeds
Adequate
Approaches
Unsatisfactory
Critical

As required by statute, the performance compares the academic growth of students at each charter school with the growth of students in zoned schools those students would have otherwise attended. The Board-mandated High Stakes Review was incorporated into the Performance Framework as an addendum.

The Authority conducted its baseline review of Nevada Virtual’s academic performance in the fall of 2013 (Exhibit 1). The review resulted in a rating of Unsatisfactory on the academic framework. Based on that rating, the Authority issued a Notice of Concern in the fall of 2013.

The Authority conducted a second review of Nevada Virtual Academy’s academic performance in the fall of 2014 (Exhibit 2). That review resulted in a rating of Approaches on the academic framework. Based on that rating, the Authority issued a Notice of Breach in the fall of 2014.

After substantial delay, the Nevada Department of Education released the results of the 2015 Smarter Balanced Assessments (SBAC) on November 18, 2015. At that time, the Department informed local education agencies and schools that the statewide irregularity which disrupted testing participation for schools and districts was severe enough as to call into question the results of the SBAC for those students who were able to participate. While planning for the 2015 Academic Performance Framework had assumed that growth calculations would be excluded due to the fact that this was the first year of the assessment, the determination that irregularity also called into question the validity of status results has yielded a situation where there are insufficient status data points to calculate an academic framework for 2015.

As noted above, the High Stakes Review was originally scheduled for the fall of 2015. In July 2015, after receiving a Notice of Concern in 2013 and a Notice of Breach in 2014 and operating for the remainder of 2014-15, Nevada Virtual requested an amendment to its charter contract to make several programmatic changes. In the discussion regarding that amendment, staff specifically noted that these changes were happening far too late to impact the results of the High Stakes Review or any other decision the board might make in 2015-16. Based on extensive discussion with staff and the school, the Authority approved that amendment request and adopted staff’s linked recommendation to postpone the High Stakes Review to the first quarter of calendar year 2016 based on staff’s concern that delays in the scoring of the 2015 Smarter Balanced Assessments would result in data being unavailable until far later than had initially been promised by the testing vendor.

Following the Board's approval of that postponement, staff and counsel agreed to schedule the High Stakes review for the March meeting. While the contract is silent on any required or optional input from the school, this request of counsel and members of Nevada Virtual's board was granted to permit the school the maximum amount of time to assemble additional evidence for consideration by the Board. At that time, staff and counsel also advised members of Nevada Virtual's board of the importance of third party validation of any data points the school wished to share with staff and present as part of its own presentation to the SPCSA Board during the board's consideration of staff's High Stakes Review recommendation. Nevada Virtual submitted the attached materials for staff consideration on March 4, 2016 and copied the Board on that submission. They are provided here for the record as Exhibit 3.

Analysis:

Due to changes to the school's management contract, the financial issues identified in the renewal have not recurred.

As noted previously, the school's academic performance was rated Unsatisfactory on the 2013 academic framework based on 2012-13 data analyzed and reported following the renewal and it was rated Approaches on the 2014 framework based on 2013-14 data. No academic growth or status data is available for the 2014-15 academic year on SBAC and the school's has only baseline data in two grades on ACT Aspire. Moreover, because the 2015 testing irregularity resulted in questionable baseline status data on the SBAC, no SBAC growth data will be available in 2015-16. Similarly, the school will only have one year of ACT Aspire growth data in 2015-16. The earliest point when the school will be able to be rated completely is the fall of 2017-18, when 2016-17 data will be released by the testing vendors. That timeline assumes that there is no additional disruption due to testing changes mandated by the Legislature or the State Board. Consequently, the earliest a full data set will be available to evaluate a third year of Nevada Virtual Academy's performance on the academic framework is the fall of 2017. In the event that the High Stakes Review were continued or postponed until the fall of 2017, this would result in an accountability decision that could take effect no earlier than the end of the 2017-18 school year and a two year extension of the school's operations with no guarantee of improved performance beyond the 2013-14 Approaches designation.

Nevada Virtual was rated Unsatisfactory in 2013 and Approaches in 2014. None of the objective, externally verified data available supports a conclusion that the school made substantial progress in closing the gap between baseline performance and "Adequate", as described in the performance framework within three years. Thus Nevada Virtual has not demonstrated substantial progress towards meeting the Authority's academic performance expectations. Nevada Virtual did not meet the standard set forth by the Board and is eligible for closure based on the results of the High Stakes Review.

Recommendation:

Holding a charter contract is not a license or a property right. It is a privilege and a public trust, whereby the state invests public funds, entrusts our citizens' children, and provides the state's imprimatur on the charter school and its governing body.

Staff recommends that the Board terminate the charter contract and close Nevada Virtual Academy at the end of the 2015-16 academic year.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, should the school's governing body propose dramatic governance, organizational, policy, and academic program changes that the Board, in its sole discretion, determines are comprehensive enough to merit ongoing operation, staff is prepared to recommend that the Board rescind the termination decision and amend the charter contract, continuing the High Stakes Review to the fall of 2017 with a target of Adequate. Furthermore, the Board should require that the school amend the charter contract to require that the school achieve an Exceeds or Exceptional ranking by the fall of 2018 to merit renewal at the end of the 2018-19 school year.

2012-2013

Nevada Virtual Academy
K-12 school with a student population of 4497

SPCSA Overall School Rating	
21.92	U
Does Not Meet Standard	

	GROWTH								GAP				STATUS								CAREER & COLLEGE READY			
	MGP Reading (EL, MS, HS)	MGP Math (EL, MS, HS)	AGP Reading Comparison (EL, MS)	AGP Math Comparison (EL, MS)	AGP Reading (EL, MS)	AGP Math (EL, MS)	EXPLORE to PLAN Growth English (HS)	EXPLORE to PLAN Growth Math (HS)	GAP Reading AGP (EL, MS)	GAP Math AGP (EL, MS)	GAP Reading Proficiency (HS)	GAP Math Proficiency (HS)	Reading Proficiency (EL, MS, HS)	Math Proficiency (EL, MS, HS)	Proficiency Reading Comparison (HS)	Proficiency Math Comparison (HS)	EXPLORE Proficiency English (MS, HS)	EXPLORE Proficiency Math (MS, HS)	PLAN Proficiency English (HS)	PLAN Proficiency Math (HS)	Graduation Rate 4-Year (HS)	Graduation Rate 5-Year (HS)	Post Secondary Readiness (HS)	
404.1	U	U	U	U	AP	U	NA	NA	U	C	NA	NA	AP	U	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
404.2	U	U	U	U	AD	U	NA	NA	AD	C	NA	NA	AP	U	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
404.3	U	U	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	AD	AP	AP	U	AP	U	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	U	U	NA	NA

Quality	EX Exceptional	≥95
	EC Exceeds	≥75 and <95
Meets Standard	AD Adequate	≥50 and <75
	AP Approaches	≥25 and <50
Does Not Meet Standard	U Unsatisfactory	≥5 and <25
	C Critical	<5
	NA Missing or Not Applicable	

School Level Rating				N	Weighted	
	N	Total Pts	Rating		Percentage	Total Pts
404.1	1072	20.25	U	3854	0.28	5.63
404.2	1023	25.69	AP		0.27	6.82
404.3	1759	20.75	U		0.46	9.47

Continuous Enrollment			
	Eligible	YIS	%
404.1	1002	793	79.14%
404.2	1002	766	76.45%
404.3	837	547	65.35%

NSPF Rating	
404.1	Two-Star
404.2	Two-Star
404.3	Two-Star

Nevada Virtual Academy

State Public Charter School Authority Academic Performance Framework Guidance Document for 2013-2014

The chart below outlines the student achievement data elements that are incorporated into the State Public Charter School Authority Academic Performance Framework for **Elementary Schools**. Each data element is assigned an SPCSA point score based on one of the following two rubrics:

MGP Reading, MGP Math, AGP Reading, AGP Math, GAP Reading AGP, and GAP Math AGP			
Actual Score Ranges	Color Code	Designation	SPCSA Point Value
≥95	EX	Exceptional	97.5
>75 and <95	EC	Exceeds	85.0
≥50 and <75	AD	Adequate	62.5
≥25 and <50	AP	Approaches	37.5
≥5 and <25	U	Unsatisfactory	15.0
<5	C	Critical	2.5
	NA	Missing or Not Applicable	

AGP Reading Comparison School and AGP Math Comparison School			
Actual Score Ranges	Color Code	Designation	SPCSA Point Value
≥20	EX	Exceptional	97.5
≥10 and <20	EC	Exceeds	85.0
≥0 and <10	AD	Adequate	62.5
≥-10 and <0	AP	Approaches	37.5
≥-20 and <-10	U	Unsatisfactory	15.0
<-20	C	Critical	2.5
	NA	Missing or Not Applicable	

Elementary School Measures

Growth				
Data Element	Source	Actual Score	Assigned Value	SPCSA Assigned Score
MGP Reading	NSPF	32	Approaches	37.5
MGP Math	NSPF	29	Approaches	37.5
AGP Reading	NSPF	40.8%	Approaches	37.5
AGP Math	NSPF	26%	Approaches	37.5
AGP Reading Comparison School	Calculated from Count Day File/NSPF	-16.24%	Unsatisfactory	15
AGP Math Comparison School	Calculated from Count Day File/NSPF	-30.40%	Critical	2.5
GAP Reading AGP	NSPF	33.9%	Approaches	37.5
GAP Math AGP	NSPF	18%	Unsatisfactory	15
Add the Growth Assigned Scores and divide by the number of scores to determine the average.				220 ÷ 8 = 27.5
Multiply the average by 60% to obtain the weighted score.				27.5 X 60% = 16.5

Status				
Data Element	Source	Actual Score	Assigned Value	SPCSA Assigned Score
Reading Proficiency	NSPF	56%	Adequate	62.5
Math Proficiency	NSPF	47.7%	Approaches	37.5
Add the Status Assigned Scores and divide by the number of scores to determine the average.				100 ÷ 2 = 50
Multiply the average by 40% to obtain the weighted score.				50 X 40% = 20.0

To calculate the overall Elementary School score and designation, add the Growth weighted score and the Status weighted score. Use the Designations chart below to determine the Elementary School rating.	16.5 + 20.0 = 36.5 Approaches
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Designations Chart	
Point Range	Designation/Color
95.0 - 100.0	Exceptional
75.0 - 94.9	Exceeds
50.0 - 74.9	Adequate
25.0 - 49.9	Approaches
5.0 - 24.9	Unsatisfactory
0.0 - 4.9	Critical

Nevada Virtual Academy

State Public Charter School Authority Academic Performance Framework

Guidance Document for 2013-2014

The chart below outlines the student achievement data elements that are incorporated into the State Public Charter School Authority Academic Performance Framework for **Middle Schools**. Each data element is assigned an SPCSA point score based on one of the following two rubrics:

MGP Reading, MGP Math, AGP Reading, AGP Math, GAP Reading AGP, and GAP Math AGP			
Actual Score Ranges	Color Code	Designation	SPCSA Point Value
≥95	EX	Exceptional	97.5
>75 and <95	EC	Exceeds	85.0
≥50 and <75	AD	Adequate	62.5
≥25 and <50	AP	Approaches	37.5
≥5 and <25	U	Unsatisfactory	15.0
<5	C	Critical	2.5
	NA	Missing or Not Applicable	

AGP Reading Comparison School and AGP Math Comparison School			
Actual Score Ranges	Color Code	Designation	SPCSA Point Value
≥20	EX	Exceptional	97.5
≥10 and <20	EC	Exceeds	85.0
≥0 and <10	AD	Adequate	62.5
≥-10 and <0	AP	Approaches	37.5
≥-20 and <-10	U	Unsatisfactory	15.0
<-20	C	Critical	2.5
	NA	Missing or Not Applicable	

Middle School Measures

Growth

Data Element	Source	Actual Score	Assigned Value	SPCSA Assigned Score
MGP Reading	NSPF	38	Approaches	37.5
MGP Math	NSPF	40	Approaches	37.5
AGP Reading	NSPF	46.1%	Approaches	37.5
AGP Math	NSPF	23.3%	Unsatisfactory	15
AGP Reading Comparison School	Calculated from Count Day File/NSPF	-10.91%	Unsatisfactory	15
AGP Math Comparison School	Calculated from Count Day File/NSPF	-8.54%	Approaches	37.5
GAP Reading AGP	NSPF	37.8%	Approaches	37.5
GAP Math AGP	NSPF	16.2%	Unsatisfactory	15
Add the Growth Assigned Scores and divide by the number of scores to determine the average.				$232.5 \div 8 = 29.1$
Multiply the average by 60% to obtain the weighted score.				$29.1 \times 60\% = \mathbf{17.4}$

Status

Data Element	Source	Actual Score	Assigned Value	SPCSA Assigned Score
Reading Proficiency	NSPF	48.4%	Approaches	37.5
Math Proficiency	NSPF	34.8%	Approaches	37.5
Add the Status Assigned Scores and divide by the number of scores to determine the average.				$75 \div 2 = 37.5$
Multiply the average by 40% to obtain the weighted score.				$37.5 \times 40\% = \mathbf{15}$

To calculate the overall Elementary School score and designation, add the Growth weighted score and the Status weighted score. Use the Designations chart below to determine the Middle School rating.

$17.4 + 15 = 32.4$
Approaches

Designations Chart

Point Range	Designation/Color
95.0 - 100.0	Exceptional
75.0 - 94.9	Exceeds
50.0 - 74.9	Adequate
25.0 - 49.9	Approaches
5.0 - 24.9	Unsatisfactory
0.0 - 4.9	Critical

Nevada Virtual Academy

State Public Charter School Authority Academic Performance Framework Guidance Document for 2013-2014

The chart below outlines the student achievement data elements that are incorporated into the State Public Charter School Authority Academic Performance Framework for **High Schools**. Each data element is assigned an SPCSA point score based on one of the following two rubrics:

MGP Reading, MGP Math, Sub-Group Proficiency GAP Reading, Sub-Group Proficiency GAP Math, Reading Proficiency, Math Proficiency, 4 th Year Grad Cohort, and 5 th Year Grad Cohort			
Actual Score Ranges	Color Code	Designation	SPCSA Point Value
≥95	EX	Exceptional	97.5
≥75 and <95	EC	Exceeds	85.0
≥50 and <75	AD	Adequate	62.5
≥25 and <50	AP	Approaches	37.5
≥5 and <25	U	Unsatisfactory	15.0
<5	C	Critical	2.5
	NA	Missing or Not Applicable	

Proficiency Reading Comparison School and Proficiency Math Comparison School			
Actual Score Ranges	Color Code	Designation	SPCSA Point Value
≥30	EX	Exceptional	97.5
≥15 and <30	EC	Exceeds	85.0
≥0 and <15	AD	Adequate	62.5
≥-15 and <0	AP	Approaches	37.5
≥-30 and <-15	U	Unsatisfactory	15.0
<-30	C	Critical	2.5
	NA	Missing or Not Applicable	

High School Measures

Growth				
Data Element	Source	Actual Score	Assigned Value	Assigned Score
MGP Reading	NSPF	49	Approaches	37.5
MGP Math	NSPF	34	Approaches	37.5
Add the Growth Assigned Scores and divide by the number of scores to determine the average.				$75 \div 2 = 37.5$
Multiply the average by 40% to obtain the weighted score.				$37.5 \times 40\% = 15$

Status				
Data Element	Source	Actual Score	Assigned Value	Assigned Score
Sub-Group Proficiency GAP Reading	NSPF	-9.47	Adequate	62.5
Sub-Group Proficiency GAP Math	NSPF	-20.08	Approaches	37.5
Reading Proficiency	NSPF	79.50	Exceeds	85.0
Math Proficiency	NSPF	63.50	Adequate	62.5
Proficiency Reading Comparison	Calculated from Count Day File/NSPF	-0.80	Approaches	37.5
Proficiency Math Comparison	Calculated from Count Day File/NSPF	-17.33	Unsatisfactory	15
Add the Status Assigned Scores and divide by the number of scores to determine the average.				$300 \div 6 = 50$
Multiply the average by 30% to obtain the weighted score.				$50 \times 30\% = 15$

College and Career Readiness				
Data Element	Source	Actual Score	Assigned Value	Assigned Score
4 th Year Grad Cohort	NSPF	52.29	Adequate	62.5
5 th Year Grad Cohort	NSPF	34.31	Approaches	37.5
Add College & Career Readiness Assigned Scores. Divide by the number of scores to determine average.				$100 \div 2 = 50$
Multiply the average by 30% to obtain the weighted score.				$50 \times 30\% = 15$

To calculate the overall High School score and designation, add Growth weighted score, Status weighted score, and College and Career Readiness weighted score. Use the Designations chart to determine the High School rating.	15 + 15 + 15 = 45 Approaches
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Designations Chart	
Point Range	Designation/Color
95.0 - 100.0	Exceptional
75.0 - 94.9	Exceeds
50.0 - 74.9	Adequate
25.0 - 49.9	Approaches
5.0 - 24.9	Unsatisfactory
0.0 - 4.9	Critical

Nevada Virtual Academy

State Public Charter School Authority Academic Performance Framework
Guidance Document for 2013-2014

The chart below demonstrates the calculations used to determine a school's Overall School Rating.

Overall School Rating				
School Level	Total Points/ Designation	# of Students @ School Level	Total # of Students	Percentage of Total Population
Elementary School	36.5 Approaches	683	3033	$683 \div 3033 = 23\%$
Multiply Total Points times the Percentage of Total Population to obtain Weighted Points for Elementary School.				$36.5 \times 23\% = \mathbf{8.4}$
Middle School	32.4 Approaches	1195	3033	$1195 \div 3033 = 39\%$
Multiply Total Points times the Percentage of Total Population to obtain Weighted Points for Middle School.				$32.4 \times 39\% = \mathbf{12.6}$
High School	45 Approaches	1155	3033	$1155 \div 3033 = 38\%$
Multiply Total Points times the Percentage of Total Population to obtain Weighted Points for High School.				$45 \times 38\% = \mathbf{17.1}$

Add the Weighted Points for Elementary, Middle, and High schools to determine the overall school points total.	$8.4 + 12.6 + 17.1 = 38.1$
Use the Designations chart to determine the Overall School Rating.	Approaches

Designations Chart	
Point Range	Designation/Color
95.0 - 100.0	Exceptional
75.0 - 94.9	Exceeds
50.0 - 74.9	Adequate
25.0 - 49.9	Approaches
5.0 - 24.9	Unsatisfactory
0.0 - 4.9	Critical

From: [Dos Santos, Orlando](#)
To: [Patrick Gavin](#)
Cc: [Don Curry \(vegascurry38@gmail.com\)](#); [hendricksk@gtlaw.com](#); [Adam Johnson](#); [Melissa Mackedon \(mmackedon@oasisacademyfallon.us\)](#); [Kathleen Conaboy \(kconaboy@mcdonaldcarano.com\)](#); [noraluna5@hotmail.com](#); [rsmccord@gmail.com](#); [Elissa Wahl](#); [Marc@insidestylehome.com](#)
Subject: Nevada Virtual Academy March 25, 2016 Hard Review Materials
Date: Friday, March 04, 2016 6:40:18 AM
Attachments: [Appendix A - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix B - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix C - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix D - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix E - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix F - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix G - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix H - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix I - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix J - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix K - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix L - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix M - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix N - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix O - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix P - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix Q - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix R - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix S - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix T - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix U - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix V - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix W - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix X - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix Y - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Appendix Z - Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#); [Minutes.pdf](#); [Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Plan - Interim Year 1 School Diagnostic Report submitted by MeRE](#)

Dear Mr. Gavin:

Attached for your review are materials prepared by Nevada Virtual Academy in preparation for its high stakes review which is scheduled for March 25, 2016. We look forward to seeing your report and recommendations prior to the board meeting. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the attached, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thank you,



Orlando Dos Santos
Interim Head of School

#330-8965 South Eastern Ave
Las Vegas, NV 89123

office 702.407.1825
cell 702.499.6866
fax 702.407.5055
e-mail odossantos@nvvacademy.org

Every Student, Every Day



Nevada Virtual Academy
High Stakes Review Materials
March 25, 2016

Nevada Virtual Academy

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report was compiled in anticipation of the high stakes review scheduled for Nevada Virtual Academy (“NVVA”). Pursuant to the direction provided by the Nevada State Public Charter School Authority’s (“SPCSA’s”) Board in June of 2013, NVVA was to demonstrate substantial progress towards meeting the SPCSA’s academic performance expectations. This report examines the “*substantial progress*” NVVA has made consistent with the terms described within the Charter Contract. “Substantial Progress” per NVVA’s charter contract is based “*on the school’s aggregate academic performance (using) the Authority’s academic indicators that will result in closing the gap between baseline (SY12/13) performance and “Adequate”, as described in the performance framework within three years.*”

I. Background

- NVVA serves students in K-12 grade and has 2212 enrolled for the 2015-2016 school year.
- The average yearly Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) student population at NVVA is 53.2%.
- NVVA enrolls a large proportion of academically disadvantaged students annually.
 - 68% of new 3rd grade students are 1-2 grade levels below in Reading.
 - 73% of new 3rd grade students are 1-2 grade levels below in Math.
 - 54% of new 4th-8th grade students are 1-2 grade levels below in Reading.
 - 61% of new 4th-8th grade students are 1-2 grade levels below in Math.
- The average yearly population of students with an IEP served by NVVA is 9.93%.
- In 2015, Nevada Virtual Academy’s FRL population represented 31% of the entire FRL population in the SPCSA school portfolio.
- NVVA has created unique programs to serve its unique student population and in so doing has made substantial progress in closing the gap to better serve its students.

II. Key Findings

- The school as a whole increased its overall rating on the SPCSA Framework by 16.18 points from SY 2012/2013 to SY2013/2014.¹
 - The high school saw an increase of 24.25 points.
 - The middle school saw an increase of 6.75 points.
 - The elementary school saw an increase of 16.25 points.
- The High School Graduation Rate increased from 36.56% in 2012 to 63.53% in 2015.
- The High School Proficiency Rates have increased in every content area since 2012.
- In 2015, NVVA's 11th grade students outperformed the state average ACT Scores in English, Reading, Science, and Overall Composite Score.
- The current High School ACT math score average of 16.3 must increase to above 17.7 in order to exceed the Nevada state average.
- The number of high school students receiving Advanced Placement and/or college dual credit increased from 2.10% in 2013 to 11.76% in 2015.
- The High School received a Year One School Improvement Grant and has been working closely with McREL International to evaluate and improve the school.
- NVVA ranked 11th out of 126 Nevada Middle Schools in terms of growth between the 2013 & 2014 Nevada School Performance Framework (16 points).
- The Middle School made substantial increases in all areas since 2012.
- The Elementary School closed the gap percentages in Reading among its student with IEP population.
- The Elementary School revamped its academic plan and restructured its staffing and administrative team.
- NVVA has transitioned from I-Ready to ACT Aspire as a baseline assessment in order to better identify the needs of students and in preparation for the SPCSA new testing requirements.
- The blended learning program at NVVA has benefited students in all grade levels.

¹ Data is not available for the 2014/2015 school year due to statewide testing irregularities.

III. Conclusion

Nevada Virtual Academy made “*substantial progress*” per the Nevada State Public Charter School Authority’s terms described within the Charter Contract.

IV. Next Steps

Although NVVA has made substantial progress in the last three years, there remain opportunities for additional growth and improvement.

Nevada Virtual Academy High School received a Year One School Improvement Grant and is in the process of submitting an application to receive additional grant money for an additional 2-5 years. As part of this process, an independent third party evaluated the school and is working with the administration to further enhance the education students are provided. The school intends to increase learning opportunities for students and provide high quality professional development for staff.

Nevada Virtual Academy Middle School will continue to play an influential role in the educational excellence and life success of our students and community. This mission will continue by increasing teacher accountability, student engagement and through the streamlining of school practices.

In a turnaround approach, Nevada Virtual Academy Elementary School is setting the highest standard for educators and student growth having made changes in administration and having changed 64% of its staff. Standards and metrics for student achievement are driven towards surpassing Nevada *Read by 3* literacy benchmarks and ACT Aspire preparedness centered on innovative instructional practices, school culture and data driven instruction.

The newly instituted blended learning program² has helped students in all grade levels achieve greater academic success by incorporating the best instructional practices for virtual and on-campus learning. NVVA will continue professional development with its staff to fine-tune the instructional and engagement skills necessary to afford all students a unique opportunity to participate in an individualized, blended educational experience that will help to close every academic achievement gap.

² As the Board may recall, in July of 2015 NVVA came before the Board with an innovative program to provide additional learning options to its students in Clark County. Students outside of Clark County can receive additional tutoring outside of the virtual learning environment.

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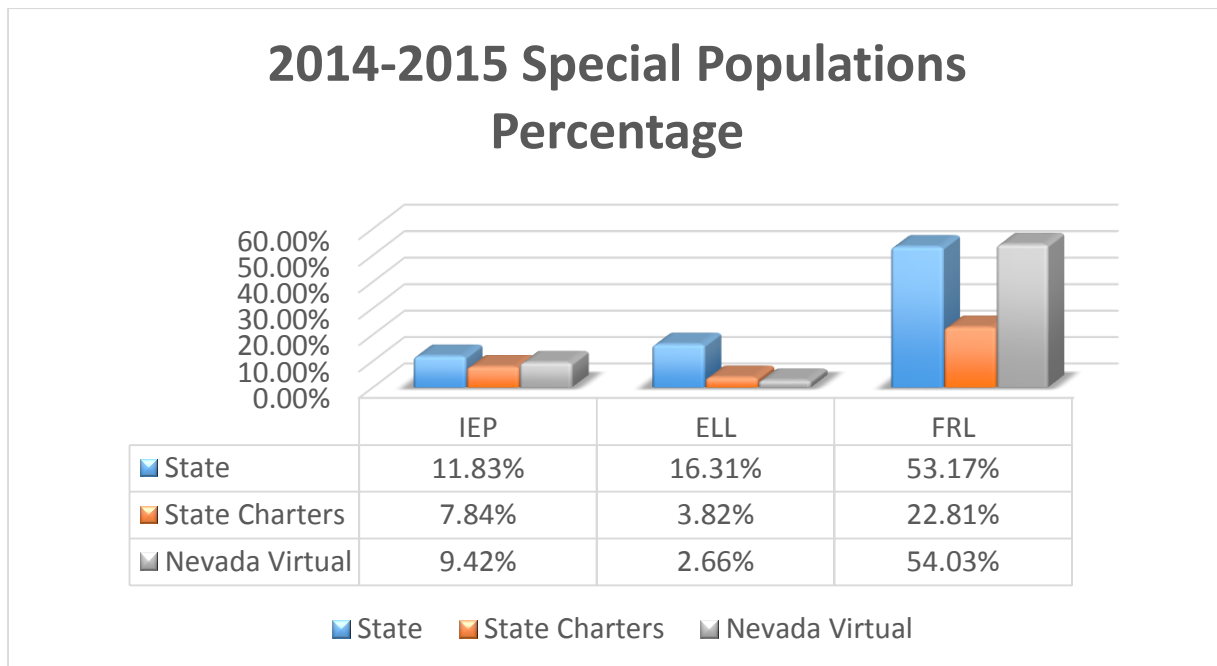
Nevada Virtual Academy

A. PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

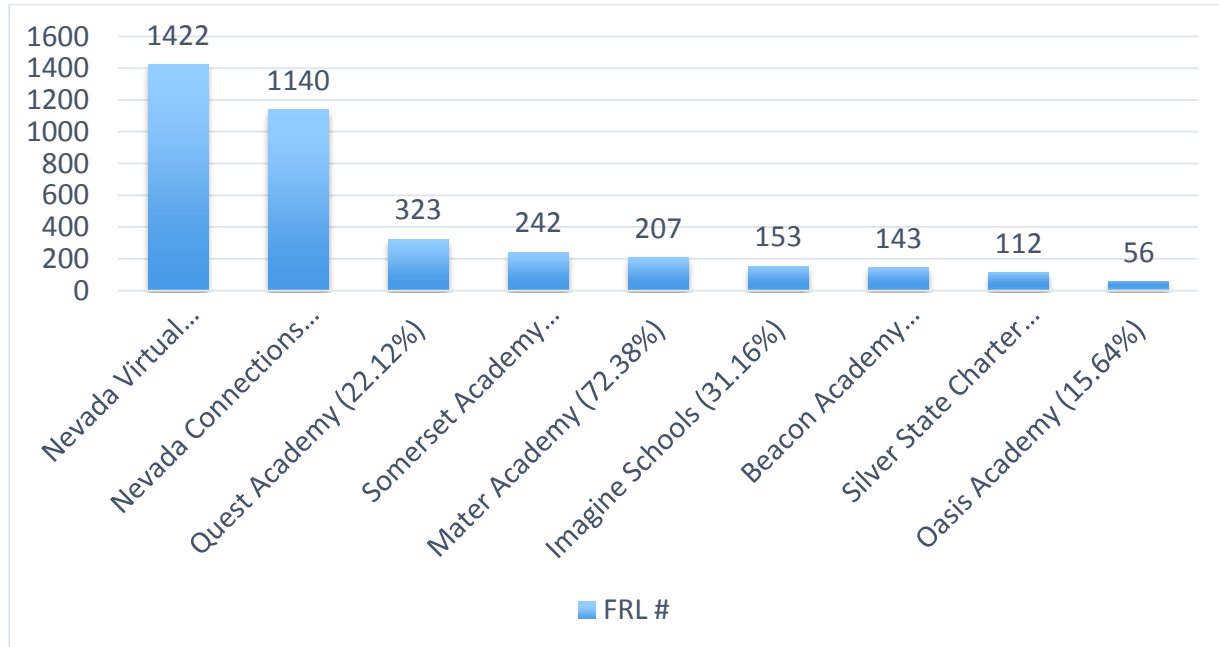
Since the renewal of its charter in 2013, the NVVA Board and school’s administrative team at Nevada Virtual Academy have worked to improve the school and accomplish the measures set forth by the SPCSA. The first step the team took was to revise the school’s mission statement to ensure it clearly reflected and communicated the ideals and goals of the school. NVVA’s mission statement is:

To promote student achievement by preparing EVERY student for college and career readiness EVERY day.

Since its inception, NVVA has prided itself on its demographic profile and for being inclusive of every student. In order to serve every child, the school must look like the state it serves. NVVA has traditionally attracted many of the state’s students who are in need of additional support. These “uniquely brilliant” but many times academically disadvantaged students and their families are in search of a program that can fill a deficiency from what they felt was lacking in their previous institution. As the table below details, NVVA’s students who qualify for Free Reduced Lunch (“FRL”), make up a large portion of the school’s total population.



As show in the graph, more than half of Nevada’s students qualify for FRL. While NVVA’s student population mirrors that of the state, it is clearly unique among other Nevada charter schools. NVVA’s population of FRL students is 31.22% higher than the other represented charter schools; in short, NVVA alone serves 31% of the entire FRL population in the State Charter Authority portfolio.



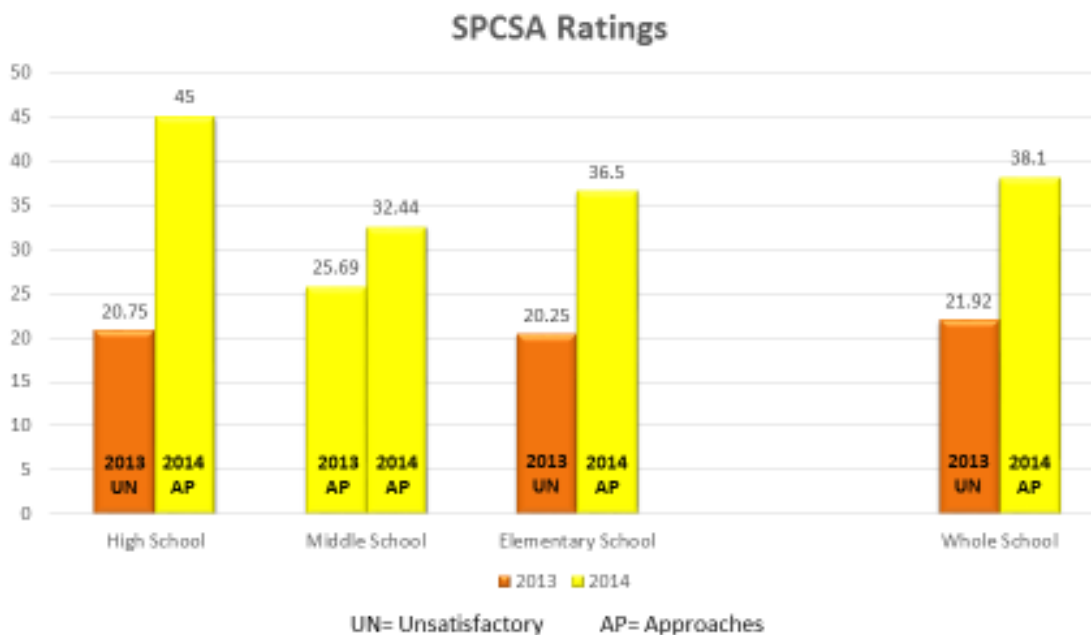
Authority Framework Rating

After its 2013 charter renewal, NVVA’s primary goal was to close the gap between the baseline data from the 2012-2013 school year and an “Adequate” rating as measured by the State Public Charter School Authority Framework.

NVVA is given four distinct classifications under the SPCSA Framework; one classification for the Elementary School, Middle School, and High School, as well as an overall school rating. As detailed by the next graph, all four measurements for the baseline 2012-2013 school year were classified as “Unsatisfactory” and have all improved.

Overall School Ratings

2013-2014 Authority Framework*



* No data for 2015

Nevada Virtual Academy

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Things have changed at NVVA. After the 2013-2014 school year, all four measurements for NVVA were upgraded to “Approaching” status. The school as a whole increased its overall rating by 16.18 points. The individual school gains in 2013-2014 were as follows:

- The high school saw an increase of 24.25 points;
- The middle school saw an increase of 6.75 points; and
- The elementary school saw an increase of 16.25 points.

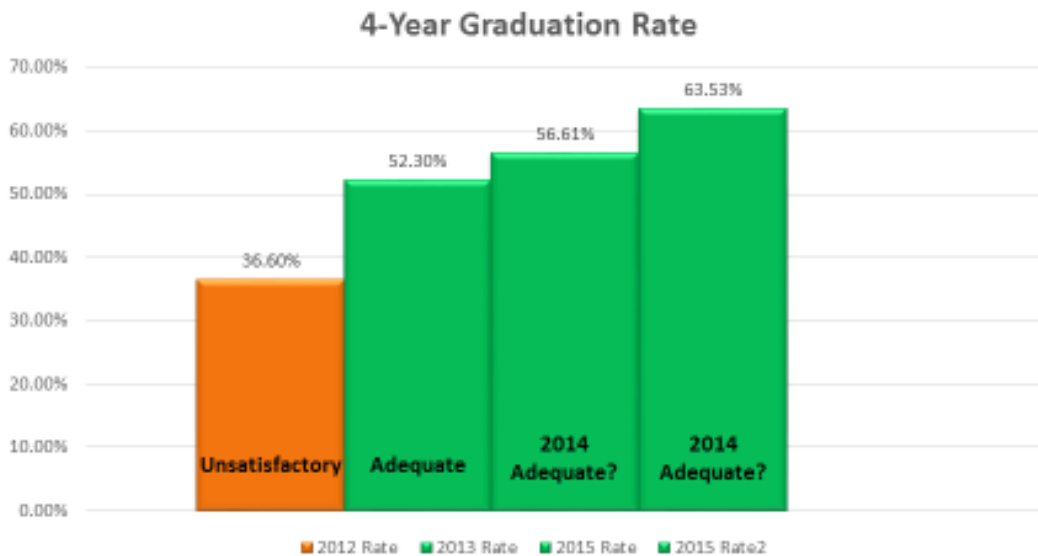
In order to understand the significant progress made by NVVA, an evaluation of the SPCSA Performance Framework and available data is needed at each school level. All three schools worked diligently to close the achievement gaps of their students, especially those academically disadvantaged students who came to NVVA below grade level.

High School

Nevada Virtual High School (NVVA-HS) has demonstrated significant growth in all academic achievement measures since the 2013-2014 school year. NVVA-HS’s graduation rate, high school proficiency exam achievement, and ACT scores have all consistently increased. This has resulted in improvement in almost all areas of the Nevada School Performance Framework as well as the SPCSA Framework.

Graduation Rate

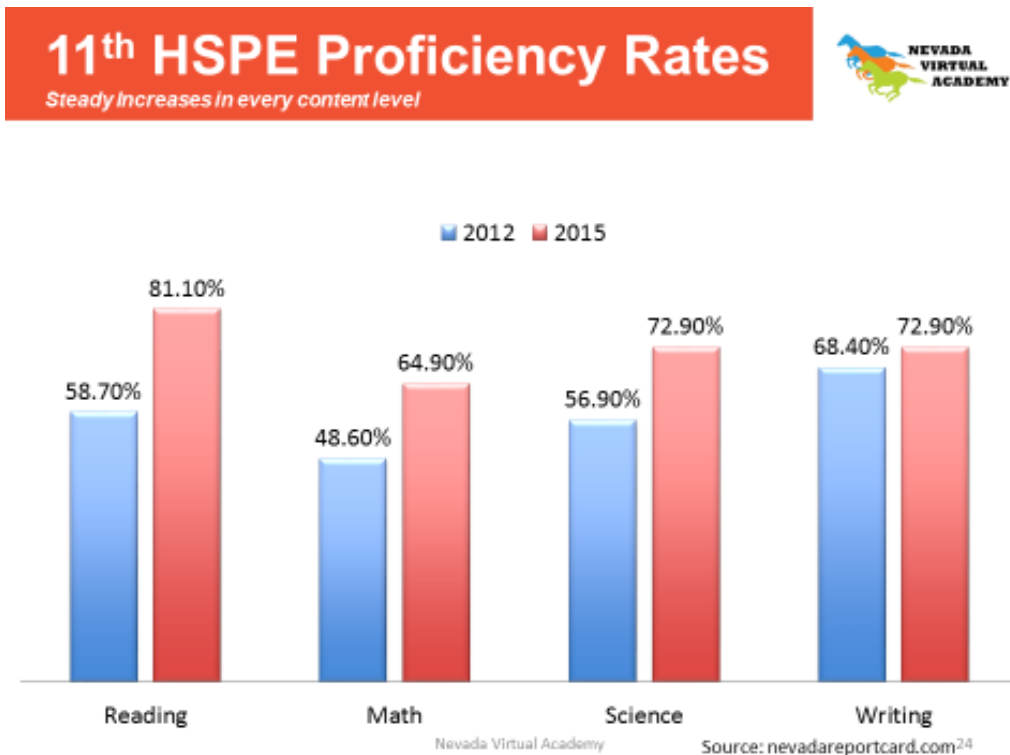
The NVVA-HS graduation rate has nearly doubled, from 36.56% in 2012 to 63.53% in 2015.



As can be examined from the above graph, NVVA-HS has reached “Adequate” status under the Authority Framework for the last three years. Although this increase is encouraging, the school’s administration team and staff are committed to exceeding the state’s graduation rate.

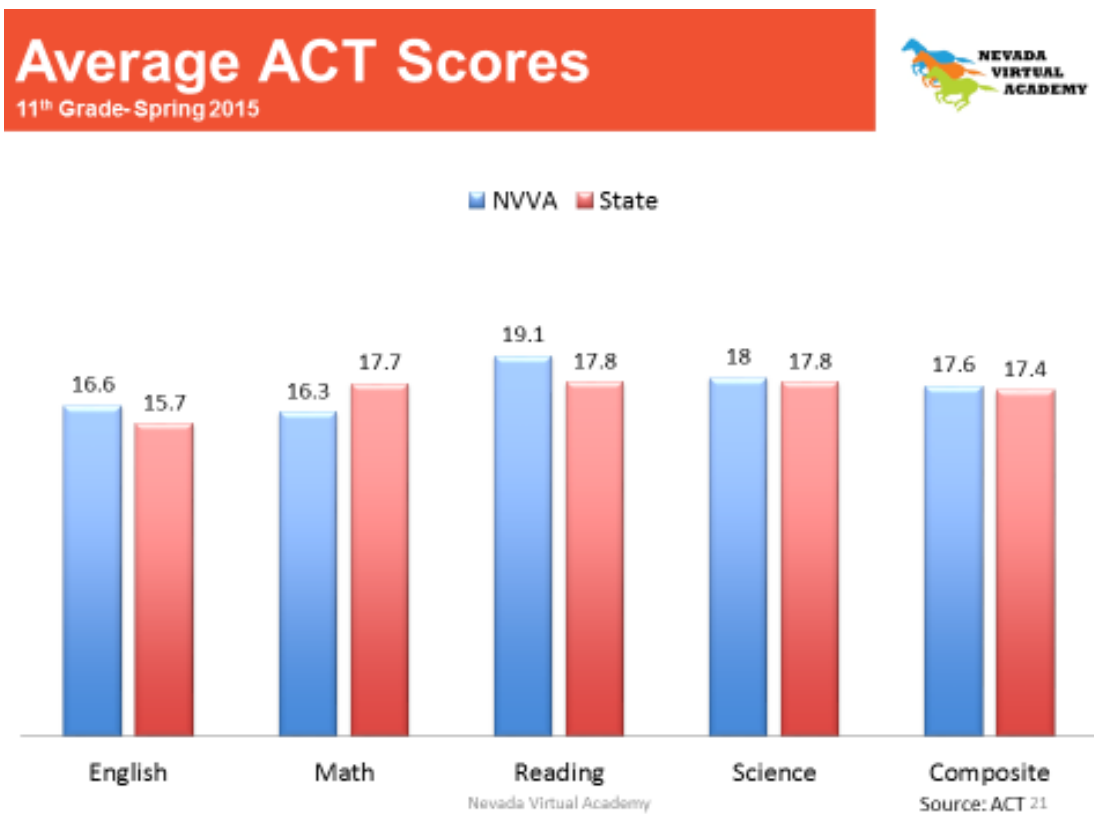
Proficiency Increase

In order to graduate with a standard diploma, students in Nevada must earn 22.5 credits, as well as pass the four High School Proficiency Exams (HSPE) in Reading, Math, Writing, and Science. With targeted intervention in the four HSPE areas, as well as an intensive credit recovery program, the high school was able to catch up a large portion of the credit deficient student population and increased its HSPE passing rates.



ACT Averages

In the 2014-2015 School year, all 11th grade students across the state of Nevada participated in the ACT assessment. After results were tabulated, NVVA Juniors outperformed the State average in English, Reading, Science, and Overall Composite Score.



It is the High School’s goal to increase its ACT average in Math from 16.3 to above the state average of 17.7 during the 2015-2016 school year.

Options for Advanced Learners

Since 2013, NVVA-HS has substantially increased options for advanced learners. This is evident in the 500% increase in the percentage of students earning a 3 or better on an Advanced Placement Exam, or earning college dual credit. Although NVVA-HS has partnerships with 7 of the 8 Nevada System of Higher Education institutions, its partnership with Western Nevada College has been particularly fruitful. In the Fall of 2015, NVVA-HS started its first cohort of the Western Nevada College Jump Start College Program. Of the 17 schools participating in this program from across the state, the 19 NVVA-HS students were among the highest achievers in the program at a course completion rate of 98.5% in English 101 and 96.4% in Math 126. A second cohort of the Jump Start Program is set to begin in the Fall of 2016.

Partnership with McREL International

By working closely with McREL International in its first year of receiving a School Improvement Grant NVVA-HS is excited about its future. The data compiled by McREL is attached as Appendix B.

Middle School

Nevada Virtual Academy Middle School (NVVA-MS) has demonstrated significant growth since the 2012-2013 school year. The school ranked 11th out of 126 Nevada middle schools in terms of growth on the Nevada School Performance Framework (16 points). This growth is attributed to the increase in highly qualified math instructors, newly implemented reading strategist program, and the increased accountability for both teachers and students.



Of the 126 Nevada Middle Schools, NVVA ranked tied for 11th in terms of NSPF growth between 2013 & 2014.

	School Name	Difference in Index Score from 2013-2014
1	Indian Springs MS (n-size= 44)	31
2	Whittell MS (n-size= 80)	30
3	Carlin MS (n-size= 60)	28
4	Silverland MS (n-size= 529)	25
5	Virginia City MS (n-size= 88)	22.5
6	Beatty MS (n-size= 22)	20
7	Expl Knowledge MS (n-size= 212)	19.33
8	Falss MS (n-size= 1419)	18.67
9	Coral Acad LV MS (n-size= 466)	17
10	Pershing MS (n-size= 179)	16.33
11	Nevada Virtual MS (n-size= 1195)	16
11	Pinecrest MS (n-size= 264)	16

Nevada Virtual Academy

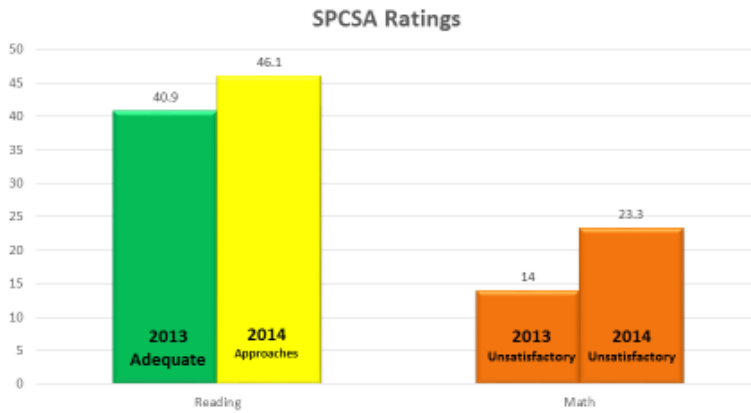
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Substantial growth on the NSPF was due in large part to the Growth and Gap Measures from the school’s special populations during the state testing. However, the school as a whole made significant growth as well. Students demonstrated substantial growth in *all* of the following areas on the state assessments from 2013:

- Math: Median Growth Percentiles (MGP)
- Reading: MGP
- Math: Adequate Growth Percentiles (AGP)
- Reading: AGP
- GAP Subgroup Math: AGP and MGP

- GAP Subgroup Reading: AGP and MGP

Middle School AGP Ratings 2013-2014 Authority Framework*

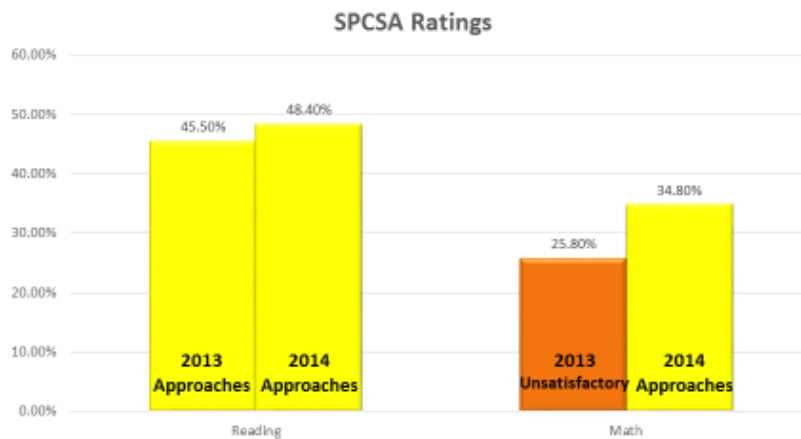
* No data for 2015

Nevada Virtual Academy

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Overall proficiency rates in Math (+9%) and ELA (+4%) have grown since 2013 as well. NVVA’s focus on providing supplemental curriculum, small group interventions and individual student data tracking have all contributed to these growth measures.

Middle School Proficiency Ratings 2013-2014 Authority Framework*

* No data for 2015

Nevada Virtual Academy

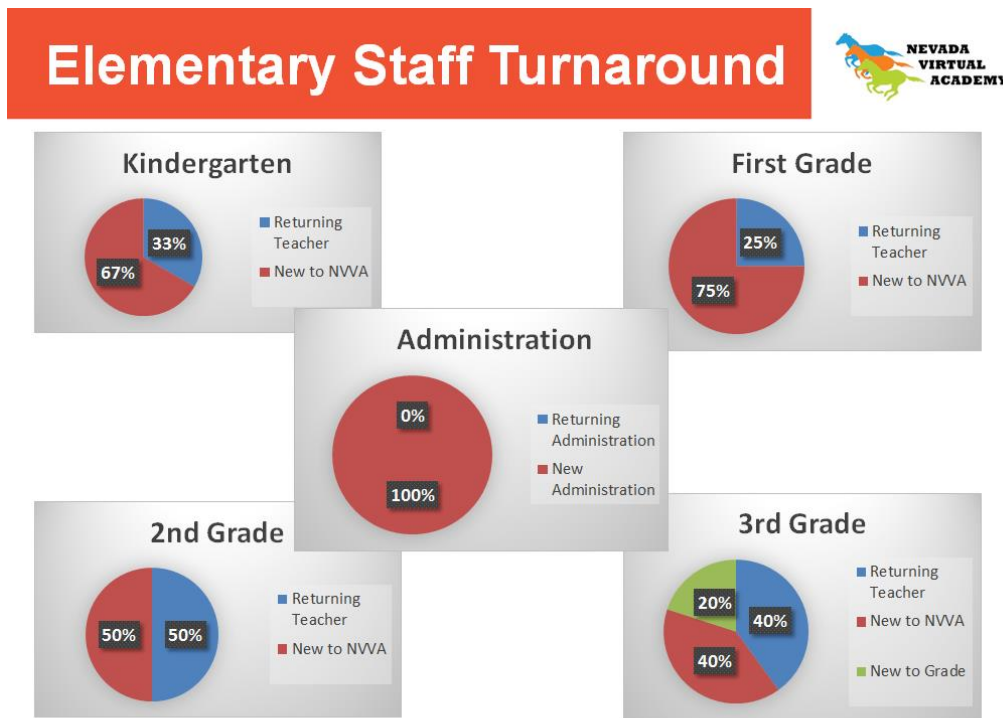
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Elementary School

Nevada Virtual Academy Elementary School (NVVA-ES) has undergone a dramatic shift since the 2013 charter renewal. The increased rigor of the Nevada Academic Standards, along with increased accountability measures passed in the last legislative session, have made academic achievement at the youngest levels a priority.

Staffing Changes

In order to increase academic achievement at NVVA-ES, staffing and administrative changes were necessary. These changes focused on meeting the needs of the diverse learners in the early grades.



The intentional staffing adjustments noted above were made with the following goals in mind:

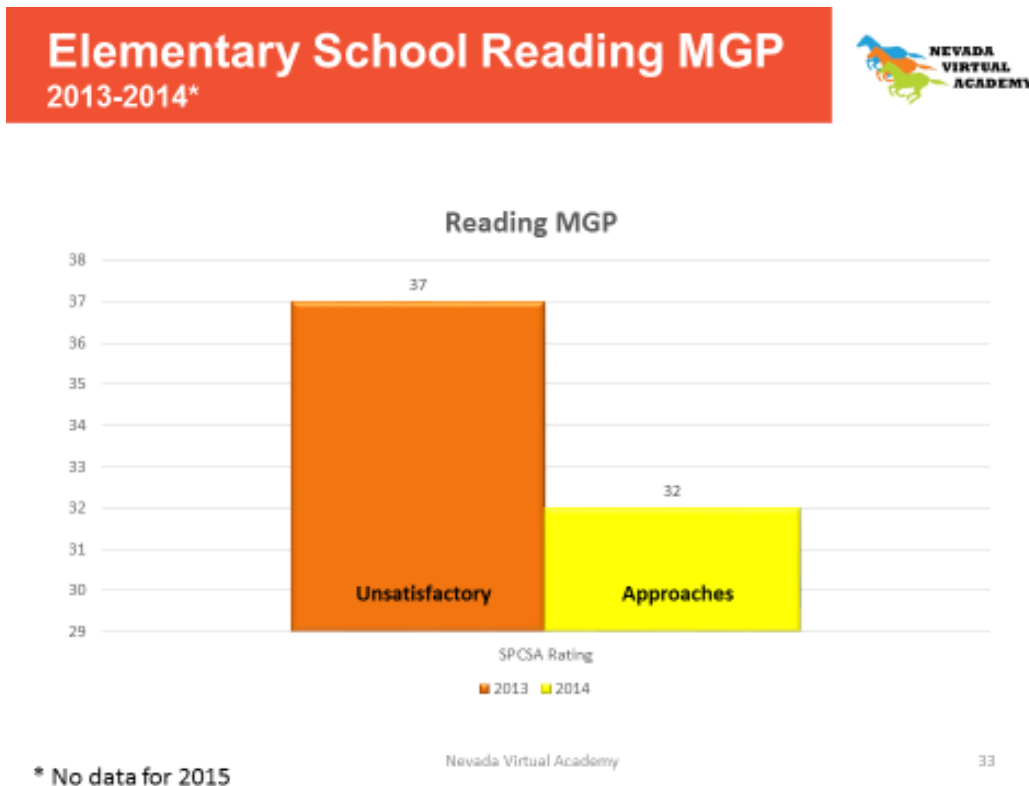
- Elevating student achievement for all students;
- Improving the literacy and achievement levels in core content areas;

- Ensuring students are educated by effective teachers;
- Supporting innovative programs to improve learning; and
- Lowering student teacher ratios.

The current administrative and instructional staff understand the task ahead, and expect this year’s summative assessment results will reflect the hard work that continues to occur.

Reading by Grade 3

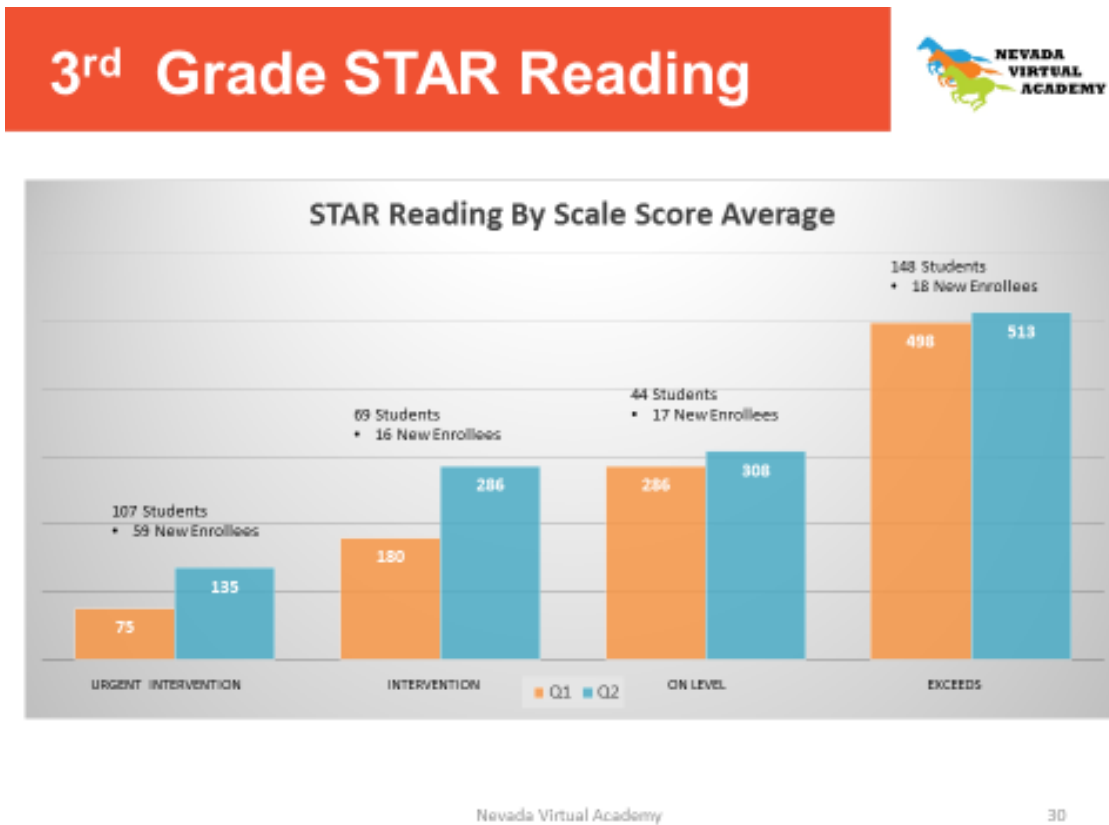
Following the 2015 legislative session, increased emphasis has been placed on literacy throughout the primary grades at NVVA. Based on previous Authority Framework data, NVVA-ES proficiency scores on the Criterion Reference Tests plateaued.



- **Reading MGP has gone from Unsatisfactory to “Approaches”**

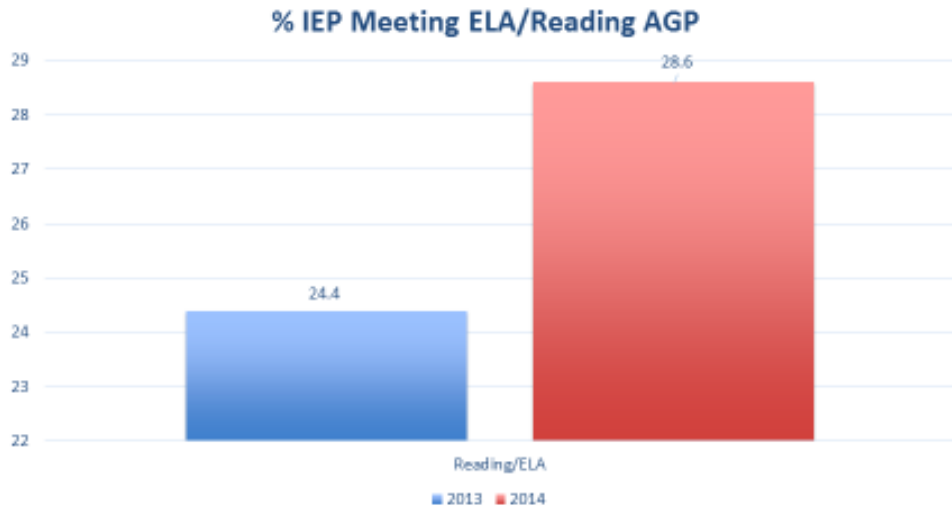
The freeze in data for the 2014-2015 school year affected NVVA-ES more than the other NVVA schools. However, NVVA-ES has closed the gap in reading for its most disadvantaged students.

In evaluating the students it serves, NVVA learned that especially at the elementary school level, students coming into the school are already below grade level. The data below illustrates that majority of new students are behind grade level in reading. Nearly 68% of new elementary school students in school year 2015-2016 required “Urgent Intervention” or “Intervention” in reading.



NVVA-ES developed its Elementary School Wide Literacy Plan as a response to the high number of deficient new students. The school’s Literacy Plan aligns to the four elements of the *Read By 3* guidelines and the nine guiding principles of the Nevada State Literacy Plan (NSLP). Notwithstanding its challenges, NVVA- ES was successful in closing the gap for its Special Education population in 2013-2014.

ES IEP Gap Percentages

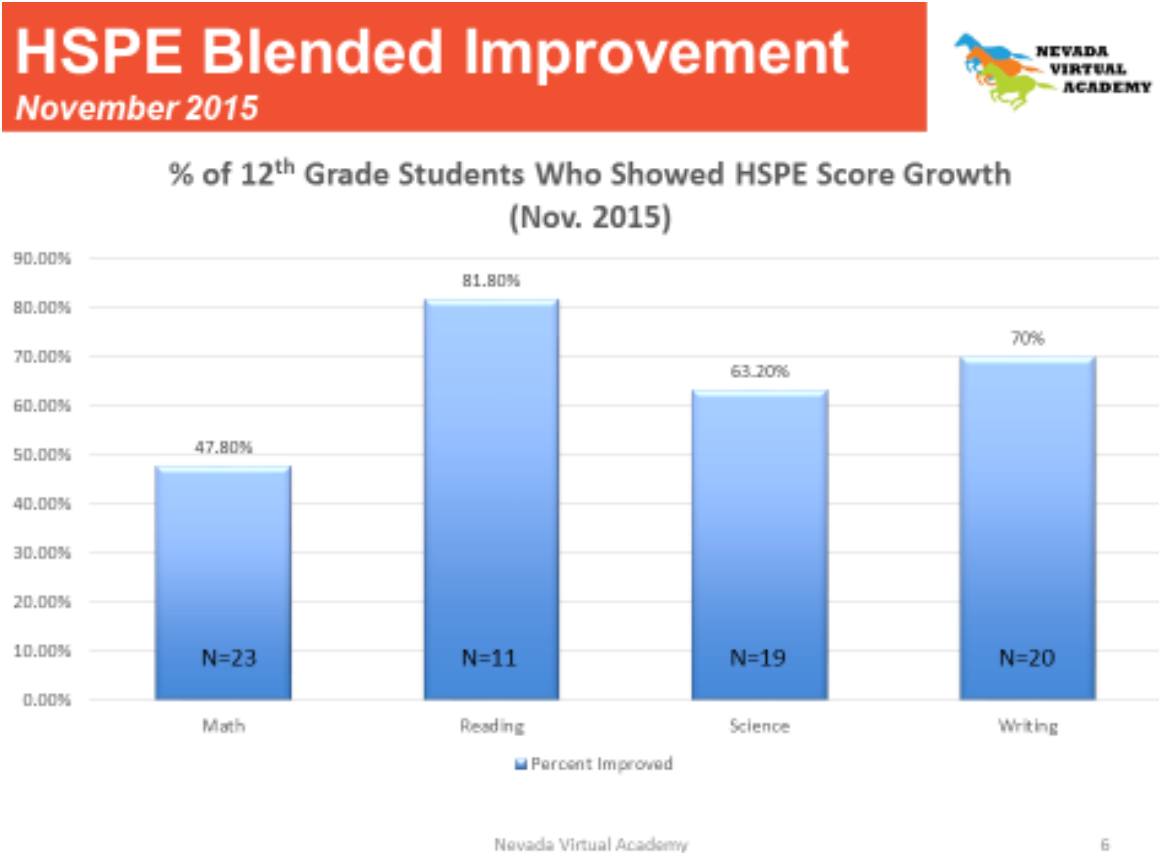


Nevada Virtual Academy

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Next Steps

In July of 2015, the SPCSA Board approved a blended learning program for NVVA’s students in Clark County. The minutes for this SPCSA Board meeting are attached as Appendix B. The newly instituted blended learning program has helped students in all grade levels achieve greater academic success by incorporating the best instructional practices for virtual and on-campus learning. Students outside of Clark County will continue to experience an increased virtual, direct instruction experience. Remote students have benefitted from increased exposure to remedial and supplemental instruction, and all three schools continue to explore ways to increase instructional opportunities for all students.

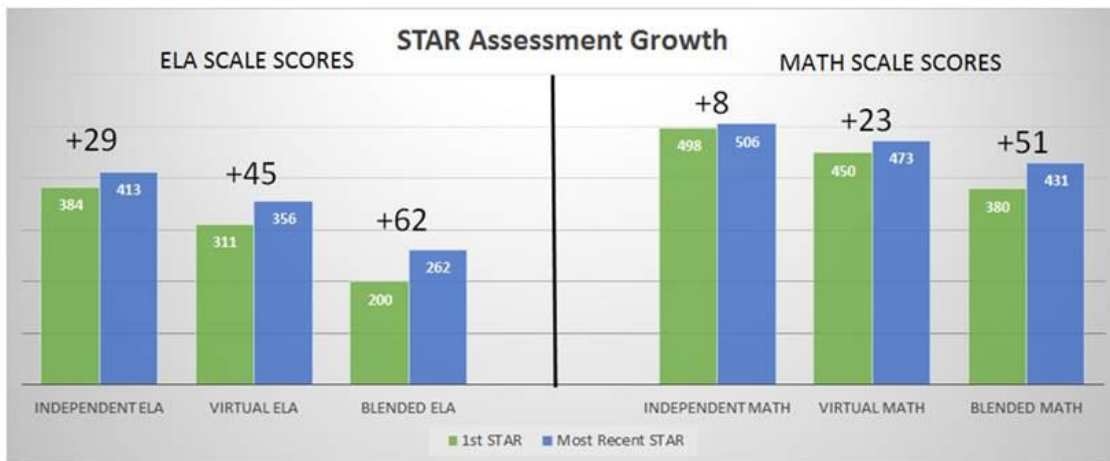


Improvement by current 12th grade students was seen at all content levels on the Fall-Spring HSPE, as shown by the graph above. NVVA will continue providing professional development to its staff to fine-tune the instructional and engagement skills necessary to afford all students a unique opportunity to participate in an individualized, blended educational experience that will help to close every academic achievement gap.

NVVA-MS has seen strong growth in its blended program based on increases in interim assessment scores. Out of 52 students in the blended learning program testing between window 2 and 3 of iReady (Oct-Dec) the average increase in scale scores in Math was 28 points, versus the schoolwide average gain of 21. The average increase in blended scale scores in Reading was 34 points, versus the schoolwide average gain of 30.

NVVA-ES has also seen a significant return on investment as a result of the overall impact of blended learning on student growth. The interactions that take place allow teachers to engage families and parents further developing connections and a collaborative commitment to supporting students both on and off site. The graph below shows the significant increase in interim assessment scores for all NVVA-ES students as demonstrated in the Nevada Department of Education-approved STAR diagnostic assessment. Students who participated in the blended program showed significantly greater growth on the average scale score from the first to the second administration of the STAR in both ELA and Math.

STAR Scale Score Growth



F. Conclusion

The consistent academic growth of Nevada Virtual Academy students combined with the schools' ability to sustain this achievement demonstrates that NVVA has made "*substantial progress*" in closing the gaps between baseline (SY12/13) performance and "Adequate", as described in the performance framework within three years. The school increased its overall rating on the SPCSA Framework by 16.18 points from SY 2012/2013 to SY2013/2014.³ In addition, significant achievement gains have been made in key areas: high school graduation rate, state proficiency exams, and ACT scores. Further, NVVA has closed achievement gaps in populations of educationally disadvantaged students and continues to serve the largest FRL student population in the SPCSA Portfolio.

Nevada Virtual Academy promotes student achievement by preparing every student every day for college and career readiness. The school has articulated its researched-based plan to continue its current growth and sustain its achievement gains. NVVA-HS was the only school in Nevada to receive a Year One Planning School Improvement Grant and is in the last stages of the Years 2-5 application process. The school's blended initiative, while still in its inaugural year, has increased both student engagement and proficiency pass rate. NVVA's administration, teachers, and staff will continue to use data-driven decisions to drive school improvement and refine instructional practices.

³ Data is not available for the 2014/2015 school year due to statewide testing irregularities.



Nevada Virtual Academy's School Improvement Grant (SIG) Year I: School Diagnostic Report

Submitted by:
McREL International
4601 DTC Blvd., Suite 500
Denver, CO 80237-2596
P: 303.632.5631
www.mcrel.org

November 20, 2015

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Introduction

In September 2015, the Nevada Virtual Academy (NVVA) High School¹ received School Improvement Grant (SIG) funding from the Nevada Department of Education. During the 2015–16 academic year, McREL International (McREL) will assist NVVA leaders with the implementation of their SIG for Year 1. This includes a school diagnostic and school turnaround plan based on six Nevada Department of Education requirements: school leadership, school infrastructure, Tier I instruction aligned to state standards, professional learning community (PLC) effectiveness, school climate, and teacher effectiveness. School diagnostic findings will be used to inform the NVVA plan for Years 2–5 of SIG funding. This report provides information about the school diagnostic process, findings from this process, and recommendations for the NVVA plan for Years 2–5 of SIG funding.

Method

Multiple data sources were collected and examined to determine the school's current alignment to six Nevada Department of Education requirements: school leadership, school infrastructure, Tier I instruction aligned to state standards, PLC effectiveness, school climate, and teacher effectiveness. Primary and existing data sources, including the measurement tools, are included in Table 1.

Table 1. Data Sources and Measurement Tools

Primary Data Sources	Existing Data Sources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Principals' Sense of Efficacy Scale</i> • <i>Leadership Team Self-Assessment</i> • <i>Collective Efficacy Scale Short Form</i> • <i>Omnibus T-Scale</i> • Parent perception survey • School leader interviews • Teacher focus group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School leader evaluation • Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model – Self-Audit • Documents related to PLC implementation (e.g., PLC agendas and minutes, school policy) • Student achievement and additional student-related data • Professional development

Data from surveys, interviews, and a focus group were collected. Efficacy of the principal and school staff were assessed using the *Principals' Sense of Efficacy Scale* (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2004) and the *Collective Efficacy Scale Short Form* (Goddard, 2002a), respectively. The *Leadership Team Self-Assessment* is a reflection tool that allows school leaders to gauge how well they are functioning as a team in terms of communication among team members and between the leadership team and the rest of the NVVA staff. Social trust was assessed using the *Omnibus T-Scale* (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). Parent feedback regarding the NVVA was gathered using a parent perception survey (The Broad Foundation, 2009).

Interviews were conducted with the three NVVA leaders (one principal and two vice principals) to assess the school infrastructure. School infrastructure is the alignment of standards, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and teacher professional development, as described in the *Nevada Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators* (Nevada Department of Education, 2015). A focus group with

¹ For this report, NVVA indicates only the high school level grades 9–12.

teachers was conducted to gather more detailed data on the implementation of PLCs. Findings from the focus group and the review of PLC-related documents, such as PLC agendas and minutes, informed the assessment of PLC effectiveness.

Existing data were obtained from the NVVA leaders, including student achievement data, teacher instructional practice scores on standards and indicators from the NEPF, documents related to the current implementation of PLCs (e.g., PLC agendas and minutes, school policy), and school leader performance scores. Table 2 shows the alignment of the school diagnostic requirements, the data source(s) or measurement tool(s), and the audience from which data was collected.

Table 2. School Diagnostic Requirements Aligned with Data Sources, Measurement Tools, and Audience

School Diagnostic Requirement	Data Source/ Measurement Tool	Audience
School Leadership	School leader evaluation	Existing data
	Professional development	
	<i>Principals' Sense of Efficacy Scale</i>	School leaders
	<i>Leadership Team Self-Assessment</i>	
School Infrastructure	School leader interviews	School leaders
Tier I Instruction aligned to state standards	Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model – Self-Audit	Existing data
PLC effectiveness	Teacher focus group	Teachers
	School leader interviews	School leaders
	Documents related to PLC implementation	Existing data
School climate	<i>Collective Efficacy Scale Short Form</i>	School leaders and teachers
	<i>Omnibus T-Scale</i>	
	Parent perception survey	Parents
Teacher Effectiveness	Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model – Self-Audit	Existing data
	Student achievement	
	Additional student-related data (i.e., dropout rate, graduation rate, and high school credit deficiency)	
	Professional development	

School Leadership

School leadership was assessed using two data sources, two existing and two primary. The existing data sources were the Success Factors School Leader Evaluation data and the professional development attendance data. The two primary sources were surveys: *Principals' Sense of Efficacy Scale* (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2004) (Appendix A) and the *Leadership Team Self-Assessment* (Appendix B). The *Principals' Sense of Efficacy Scale* and the *Leadership Team Self-Assessment* were administered to the three NVVA school leaders. All three NVVA school leaders completed the two surveys for a 100% response

rate.

School Leader Evaluation

School leader evaluation data are not included in this report for two reasons: Different evaluation instruments were used for NVVA principal and vice principals, and the time periods of the evaluations were different. The principal was evaluated using Success Factors in the 2011–12, 2012–13, and 2013–14 school years. The vice principals were evaluated with the K¹² employee evaluation form in the 2012–13 school year and the Marzano School Leader Evaluation Model in the 2014–2015 school year. So, although all three NVVA school leaders were evaluated in the 2012–13 school year, different evaluation instruments were used. For these reasons, data cannot be aggregated to make a sample size of three, which is the minimum sample size needed to report on. If available, these data may be used in future reports to assess school leadership.

Professional Development

NVVA school leaders participate in and attend professional development (PD) throughout the school year. Table 3 provides the number of school leaders who engaged in PD during the 2013–14 and 2015–15 school years.

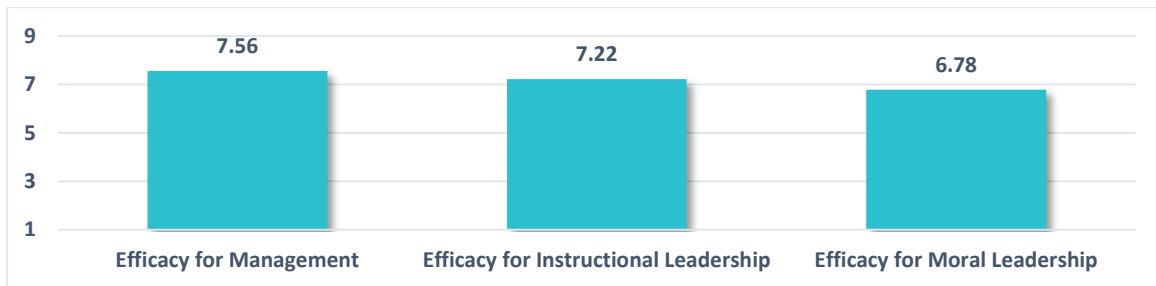
Table 3. Number of NVVA School Leaders Participating in Professional Development

	2013-2014	2014-2015
Model Schools (International Center for Leadership in Education [ICLE] Conference)	3	3
Professional Learning Communities (Solution Tree)	2	
Co-Teaching (Fitzell)	3	
Accreditation (AdvancED)	3	3
Academic Coaching (Global Results for Coaching)		3
Art and Science of Teaching (Marzano)		3
Teach Like A Champion (Lemov)	3	
ACT State Conference	3	1
American Association of School Administrators Annual Conference		1
Title I Annual Conference	1	1
Advanced Placement Conference	1	1
ASCD Annual Conference	2	
Flipped Classroom (book study)	3	
Common Core State Standards (ICLE)	3	
National Charter Conference	3	1
Blended Learning (Clayton Christensen)		2
Council for Exceptional Children Conference	2	1

Principals' Sense of Efficacy Scale

In October 2015, the *Principals' Sense of Efficacy Scale* (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2004) was administered to the NVVA principal and vice principals. This survey is comprised of three subscales with six items in each subscale: efficacy for management, efficacy for instructional leadership, and efficacy for moral leadership. (Appendix C provides the six items that comprise each of the subscales.) The response options range from 1 (*None at all*) to 9 (*A great deal*). Figure 1 presents the NVVA leader results on the *Principals' Sense of Efficacy Scale*.

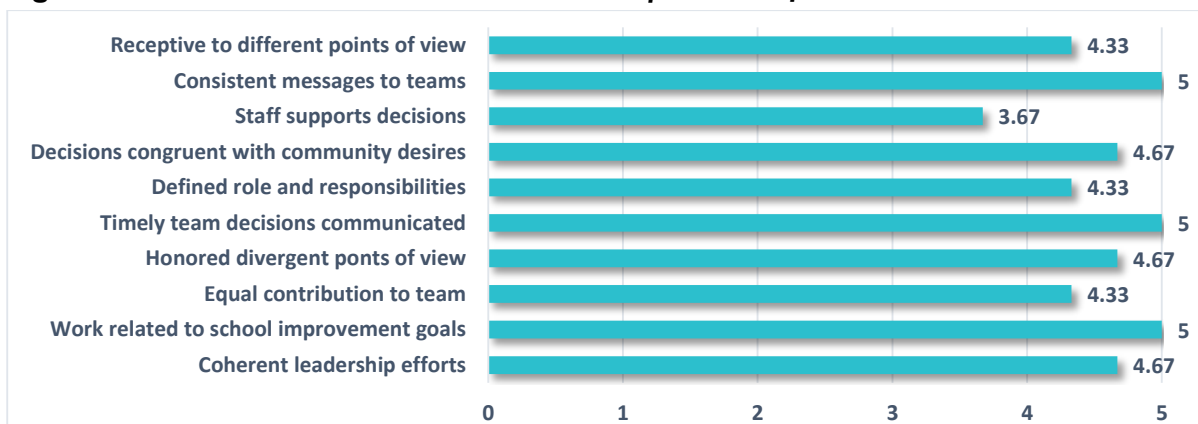
Figure 1. NVVA Leader Results on the *Principals' Sense of Efficacy Scale*



Leadership Team Self-Assessment

In October 2015, the *Leadership Team Self-Assessment* was administered to the NVVA leaders. McREL International developed the *Leadership Team Self-Assessment* as a component of the school improvement process and method for school leaders to reflect on how they operate as a team guiding the school's initiatives. This survey examines the functioning of the school leadership team (in this case, the three NVVA leaders) and their communications with school staff. The response options range from 1 (*None at all*) to 5 (*To a great extent*). Figure 2 presents the NVVA leader results on the *Leadership Team Self-Assessment*.

Figure 2. NVVA Leader Results on the *Leadership Team Self-Assessment*



School Infrastructure

School infrastructure was assessed using primary data collected through school leader interviews (Appendix D). In October 2015, the three NVVA school leaders each participated in an interview to gather their perceptions of school infrastructure and PLC effectiveness in the NVVA. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes. As previously noted, school infrastructure is described as the alignment of standards, curriculum, instruction, assessment, and teacher professional development in the *Nevada Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators* (Nevada Department of Education, 2015). The tenure of the three leaders ranged from one to four years at the NVVA. The findings below are from the questions related to school infrastructure.

Alignment of School Infrastructure

The school leaders were asked to provide their perceptions of the alignment of the Common Core State Standards (adopted by the Nevada Department of Education in 2010), the NVVA curriculum, teacher instruction, student assessments, and teacher professional development. They indicated a high level of alignment between the Common Core State Standards and the curriculum, which is purchased from K¹². The school leaders reported that the alignment between the curriculum and teacher instruction is at a high level, yet the teachers do not have a sense of ownership over the curriculum. Further, given that the curriculum is a national curriculum and the annual students assessment are specific to Nevada, the school leaders indicated there is a moderate level of alignment between the K¹² curriculum and the annual student assessment. The interim assessments, however, are provided by K¹² and are therefore aligned to the curriculum. Teachers fill the gaps between the curriculum and the annual student assessments by producing supplemental courses, resources, and interim assessments for students as well as providing specific instruction in the gap areas.

The school leaders indicated a high level of alignment between what they need to fill the gap areas and teacher professional development. In a follow-up question about how teacher professional development is determined, they reported they use student and teacher needs to identify development offerings. For

example, math content knowledge was identified as a need for teachers, so school leaders provided the opportunity for teachers to take courses through the Nevada State College. The school leaders also reported they are currently using the teacher reflection data that teachers complete about their student tracking data and is submitted weekly to the school leaders. They indicated that teacher professional development has focused on a few specific areas the past two academic years: creating interim assessments and PLCs. This school year, the professional development will focus on using data to inform instructional strategies and response to intervention strategies while infusing constructive feedback and formative assessment practices to check for student mastery.

Policy Related to School Infrastructure

The school leaders were asked about policies related to school infrastructure. They reported that K¹² does not have policy related to the alignment of the Common Core State Standards, the curriculum,

teacher instruction, student assessments, and teacher professional development. They indicated that the NVVA has an “unwritten policy” related to this alignment; however, this policy is related more to the practices within the NVVA.

Practices Related to School Infrastructure

The school leaders were asked questions about practices related to school infrastructure. These practices are actions and activities related to the school infrastructure components that produce the best outcomes and alignment of the Common Core State Standards, the curriculum, teacher instruction, student assessments, and teacher professional development. The school leaders reported that the PLC structures ensure alignment among the school infrastructure elements. The leaders of each PLC ensure that the teacher-developed interim assessments align with the state annual assessment; the school leaders also vet those assessments to ensure alignment.

The school leaders were asked a follow-up question about how they ensure that the practices are followed and alignment exists across the school infrastructure components. They indicated that each teacher is observed a minimum of three times during a school year, and interim assessments are used to place students in blended learning pathways. Then, the state assessment results are reviewed to determine whether they are properly aligned and doing what is needed to meet student needs.

The school leaders were asked what guidance and/or professional development they provided to teachers on practices to ensure school infrastructure alignment. They reported they provided guidance and time for teachers to identify the essential standards for their content areas and then determine what from the curriculum is unnecessary to meet the essential standards. The teachers worked with their department heads to do this. They reported professional development on what a “good” interim assessment is and how to develop one. The school leaders were asked how they know if professional development was implemented and effective. They indicated the classroom observations allow them to see how the professional development is being implemented, and student tracker data shows if the professional development is effective. The school leaders indicated that the ideal professional development for the current school year is response to intervention and how to implement it in blended and online learning environments.

Final Thoughts on School Infrastructure

The school leaders were asked about their general perspective in terms of the greatest strength of the school infrastructure in the NVVA. The school leaders indicated the greatest strengths of the school infrastructure are the plan to ensure the pieces are in place. The next step is to ensure the plan is implemented consistently across NVVA.

Tier I Instruction Aligned to State Standards

Tier I instruction aligned to state standards was assessed using self-audit data from the Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model (Appendix E) from the 2014–15 school year. Teachers completed a self-audit

in the fall 2014 (n = 19) and summer 2015 (n = 14). Data were included for those teachers who were still at NVVA for the 2015–16 school year; data for teachers who did not return to NVVA after the 2014–15 school year were not included in the results. The Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model is categorized into four domains with numerous elements in each. Each element has five categories: Innovating, Applying, Developing, Beginning, and Not Using. NVVA school leaders believed that Elements in Domains 1 and 2 addressed Tier 1 instruction aligned to state standards. Domain 1 relates to classroom strategies and behaviors; Domain 2 relates to planning and preparing. Figure 3 presents the results for Domain 1 Elements 1 and 2, which have to do with providing clear learning goals and scales as well as tracking student progress, respectively.

Figure 3. Domain 1 Elements 1 and 2 Results

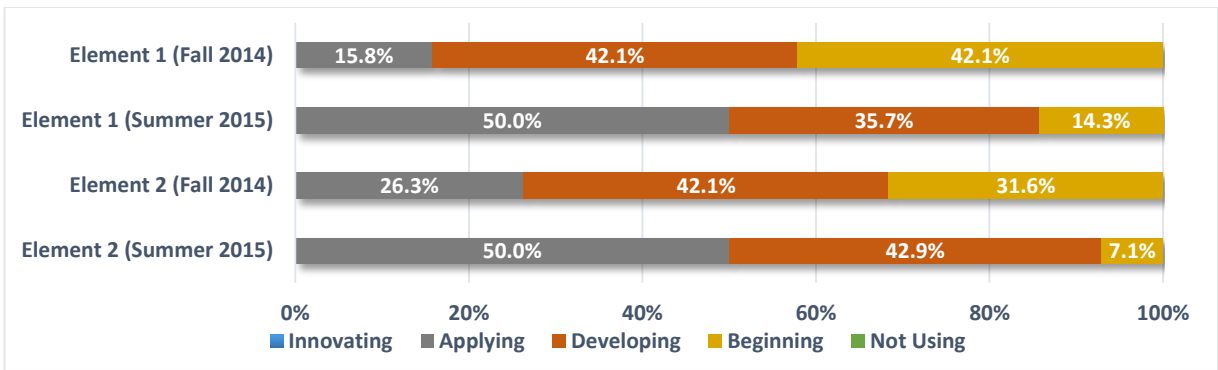


Figure 4 presents the results for Domain 1 Elements 6, 9, 11–13, 15, and 19–20, which have to do with identifying critical information, chunking content into “digestible bites,” helping students elaborate on new information, helping students record and represent knowledge, helping students reflect on their learning, organizing students to practice and deepen knowledge, helping students to practice and deepen knowledge, and helping students revise knowledge, respectively.

Figure 4. Domain I Elements 6, 9, 11–13, 15, and 19–23 Results

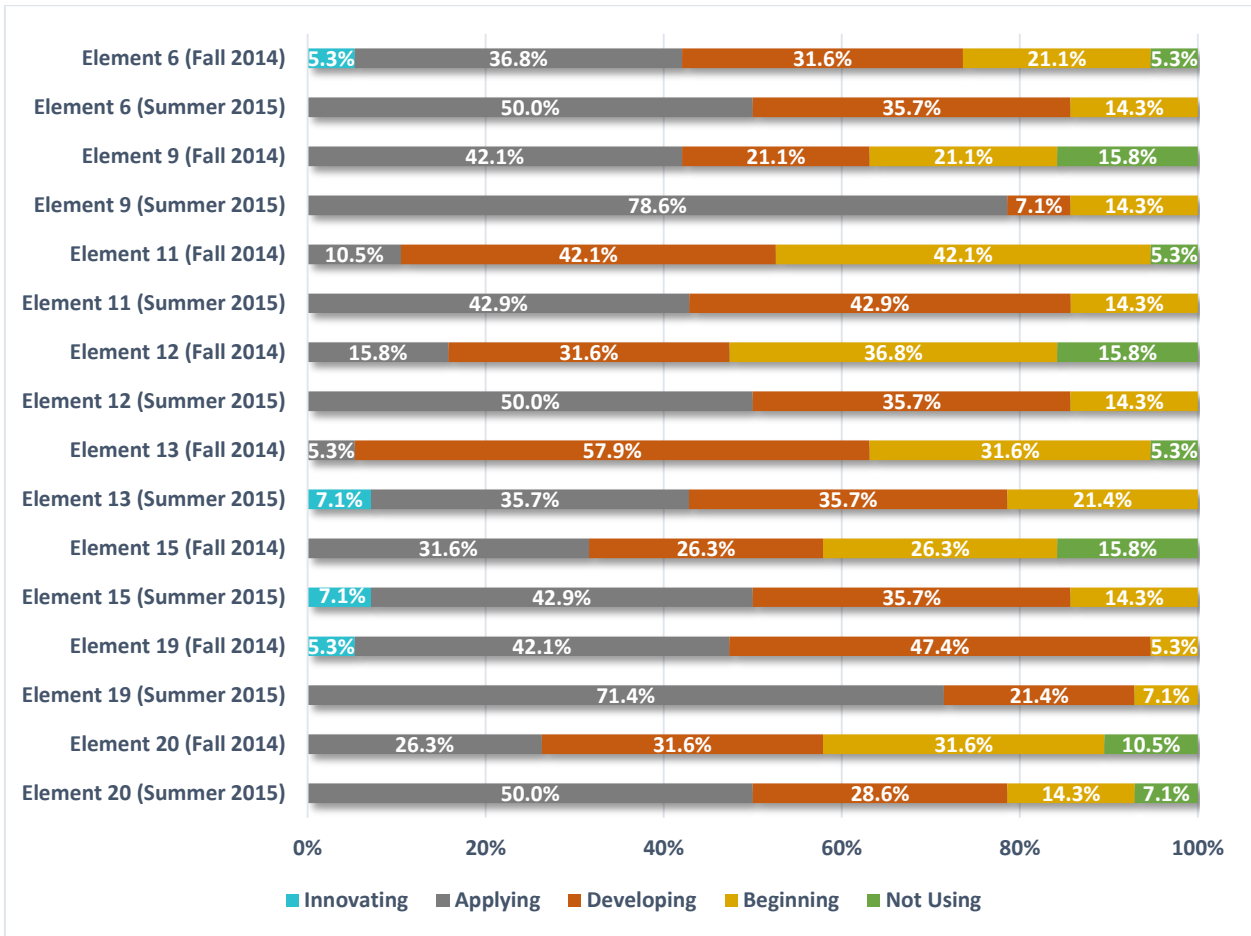


Figure 5 presents the results for Domain I Elements 21–23, which have to do with organizing students for cognitively complex tasks, engaging students in cognitively complex tasks involving hypotheses generation and testing, and providing resources and guidance, respectively.

Figure 5. Domain I Elements 21–23 Results

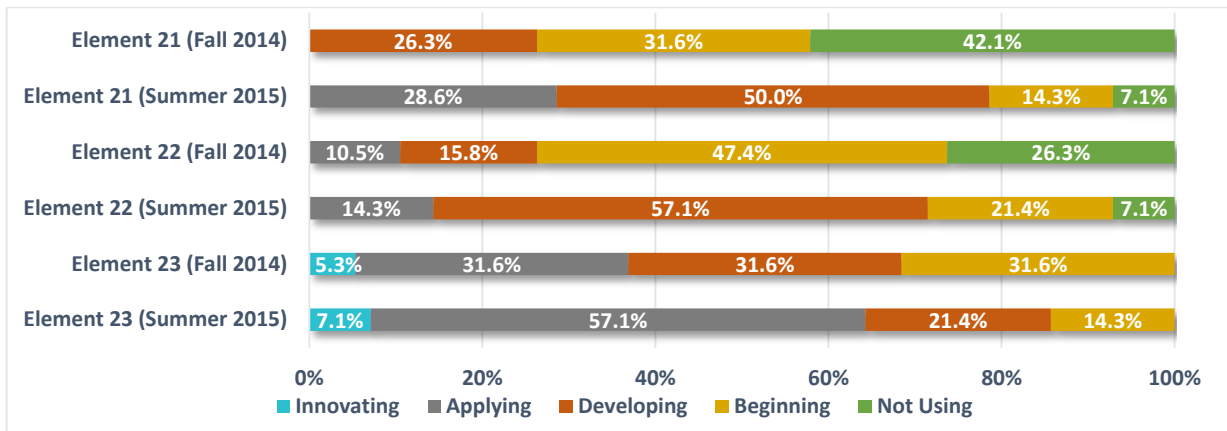
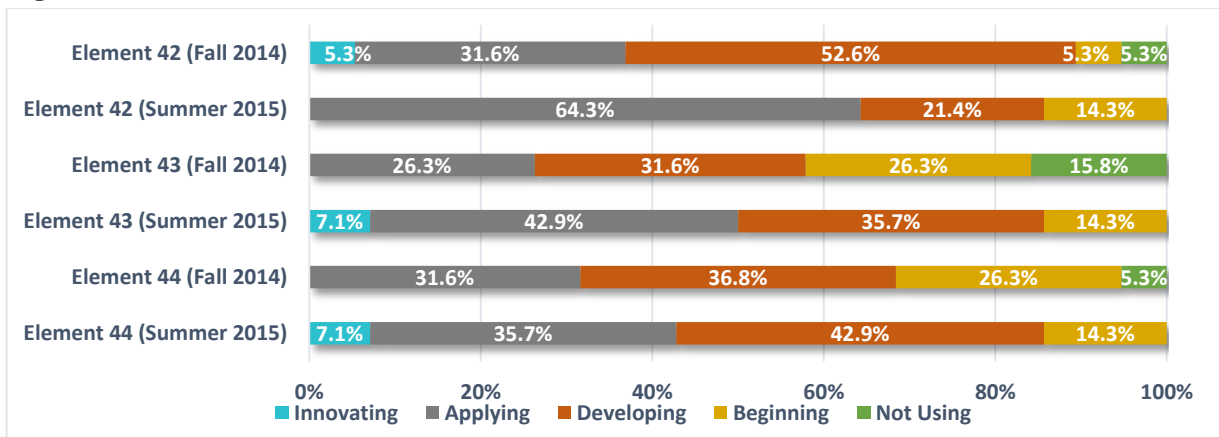


Figure 6 presents the results for Domain 2 Elements 42–44, which have to do with planning and preparing for effective scaffolding of information within lessons, planning and preparing for lessons within a unit that progresses toward a deep understanding, planning and preparing for appropriate attention to established content standards, respectively.

Figure 6. Domain 2 Elements 42–44 Results



Professional Learning Community Effectiveness

Professional Learning Community (PLC) effectiveness was assessed using three data sources: two primary data sources and one existing source. The primary sources were a teacher focus group (Appendix F) and school leader interviews. The existing data source was documents related to PLC implementation, including agendas, minutes, and artifacts.

Teacher Focus Group

In October 2015, six NVVA teachers participated in a focus group to gather their perceptions of PLC effectiveness in the NVVA. The focus group lasted approximately 60 minutes. The tenure of the six teachers ranged from one to six years at the NVVA, and they represented science, math, English language arts, social studies, and business education content areas.

General Perceptions of PLCs in the Nevada Virtual Academy

The teachers were asked to describe PLCs in the NVVA. They indicated there was more structure to the PLCs in the 2014–15 school year than in the 2015–16 school year. For example, in the 2014–15 school year, PLCs met by department with their department chairs on a weekly or biweekly basis, using a meeting schedule determined by one of the three NVVA school leaders. Norms were established and posted for every meeting. A school leader would attend some meetings. Most teachers had attended a Solution Tree training on PLCs and, based on this training, common formative assessments were administered four times per school year, in addition to the unit assessments.

The teachers indicated that in the 2015–16 school year, there has been less structure around PLCs, especially in the non-core, elective content areas. In these content areas, the PLCs usually meet when needed. The teachers are typically the only teacher in that content area, so they share in general how things are going but are unable to discuss comparable data with other teachers. School leaders typically do not attend these PLC meetings and have not provided a meeting schedule.

The teachers indicated that the PLCs in the English, math, and science content areas are more structured, especially for English and math. In these content areas, the PLCs typically meet every week according to a meeting schedule developed by a school leader, who also attends. These PLCs have established norms and use agendas that members contribute to making. In 2015–16, High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE) testing, which consisted of math, reading, science, and writing tests, has stopped. Now, only English and math are tested—and are therefore most related to the graduation rate. Teachers believed that this is why the English and math PLCs have had more structure.

The teachers were also asked their perceptions of PLC effectiveness related to collective responsibility and use of data to determine student needs. The teachers reported an increased sense of individual responsibility due to the reduction in staff from the 2014–15 school year to the 2015–16 school year. Teachers indicated that this is especially true for teachers in the non-core, elective content areas and that data are less comparable for those teachers. The teachers also indicated that they are able to ask their colleagues for help when they need it. In terms of PLC effectiveness related to use of data to determine student needs, the teachers indicated they use tracking data to see where students are, where they are falling behind, and figure out how to get them back on track. The teachers reported the math teachers are doing more of the traditional data use in PLCs, but they are unable to do so in non-core, elective content areas due to lack of comparable data.

Policies related to PLCs

The teachers were asked questions about policies related to PLCs. The teachers indicated K¹² does not have a policy related to PLCs, and that NVVA does not have a written policy. The teachers indicated that, in the 2014–15 school year, school leaders provided a PLC meeting schedule for all content areas; in the 2015–16 school year, however, they provided schedules for the core content areas (math and English; science will have one soon) but not for the non-core, elective content areas.

Practices related to PLCs

The teachers were asked questions about practices related to PLCs. These practices are actions and activities related to PLCs that produce the high levels of effectiveness. The teachers reported that in the core content areas, the department chairs organize the PLCs, and teachers share ideas of what they would like to discuss at the meetings. During meetings, norms are reviewed, data may be reviewed, and then teachers may share how they have successfully implemented an instructional strategy, for example, the use of breakout rooms on Blackboard. The teachers indicated that those in the non-core, elective content area PLCs discussed strategies and instructional games more than data since they don't have comparable data.

The teachers were also asked about the support they received to implement the PLCs. The teachers reported that the majority of NVVA staff attended a Solutions Tree training during the 2014–15 school year. During that year, there were face-to-face, monthly, all-staff meetings, which included time to work in PLCs and receive professional development on a particular strategy. The teachers reported that these meetings are not occurring in the 2015–16 school year because of a general opinion that there were too many meetings in the previous school year and because school leaders are trying to make time for implementation of the new blended model of both in-person and online teaching and learning (e.g., evacuation plan, bullying policy, keys to buildings, etc.). The teachers indicated that they submit reflections to the school leaders each week on the strategies they have implemented with their “orange” students (students who have achieved between 30–59% in the course); however, they do not receive feedback from school leaders about what has worked for other teachers.

The teachers were asked what additional support they needed from NVVA school leaders to implement the PLCs. The teachers indicated that since there has been constant change during the past three years, having more communication about the direction of the school and more guidance on the school-level initiatives would be beneficial. Additionally, the teachers reported feeling overwhelmed with the number of tasks or initiatives they need to undertake (e.g., reaching the school-wide goal of an 80% pass rate; making calls to families of homeroom students and “orange” students), and indicated a need to pare them down to maybe four essential initiatives on which to focus their time and energy.

Additionally, the teachers indicated they have ample student data to show who is failing and who is succeeding; however, they need to know how to use the data to inform instruction. Getting professional development and support on how to take the next step in the data use process is what they need from NVVA school leaders.

Final Thoughts on PLCs

The teachers were asked about their general perspective of PLCs in the NVVA in terms of their greatest strengths, biggest challenges, and changes they think would have the greatest positive impact on PLCs. They indicated the greatest strengths of PLCs are that teachers are willing to participate in PLCs, to be open and honest with one another about what they need, to help and collaborate with one another, and to try new ideas. The teachers believed the biggest challenges are having only one teacher in some content areas and a lack of school focus and direction. The teachers reported the changes that they think would have the greatest positive impact on PLCs are providing focus and direction on 3–5 initiatives and having a balance between too much structure (as in 2013–14 and 2014–15 school years) and too little structure (like in the 2015–16 school year). The teachers' final comments included: "PLCs are effective and needed," "teachers are willing to do them," "more communication from school leaders [to teachers] via virtual meetings and emails," and "teachers want to work together to do what's best for students." Finally, the teachers expressed a willingness to do what is asked of them but do not know the direction the school is going at this point—"which way is the boat pointed?"

School Leader Interviews

As mentioned previously, in October 2015, the three NVVA school leaders each participated in an interview to gather their perceptions of school infrastructure and PLC effectiveness in the NVVA. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes. The findings below are from the questions related to PLC effectiveness.

General Perceptions of PLCs in the Nevada Virtual Academy

The school leaders were also asked their perceptions of PLC effectiveness related to collective responsibility and use of data to determine student needs. They reported the PLCs are very effective in promoting collective responsibility and mutual accountability among teachers to ensure that every student is on a pathway to learning and graduation; however, they believed that teacher buy-in for the PLC structure is at the ground level, since the blended and virtual learning environments are not the typical settings for traditional PLCs. They also reported the PLCs are very effective in promoting data use to determine student needs, but the teachers need assistance with how to best help their students and what specific instructional strategies to implement. The teachers are currently using the data in a summative manner rather than a formative manner.

Practices related to PLCs

The school leaders were asked about the guidance they provided to teachers related to the structure, content, and implementation of PLC meetings. They indicated that, during the 2015–16 school year, they have been more hands-on than in previous years. For example, the school leaders plan on assisting teachers with using student tracker data to inform their instructional practice using response to intervention strategies. Additionally, the NVVA instructional coach attends some PLC meetings to provide ideas on instructional strategies that could be used based on the data.

Final Thoughts on PLCs

The school leaders were asked about their general perspective of PLCs in the NVVA in terms of their greatest strengths, biggest challenges, the changes they think would have the greatest positive impact on PLCs, and any final comments. The school leaders indicated that the greatest strengths of PLCs are the commitment and dedication of the teachers to the PLC concept. They believed the biggest challenges are applying the necessary interventions to support student learning, lack of time, and lack of clear direction. The school leaders reported the changes that they think would have the greatest positive impact on PLCs are having more physical space to work with more students in person, more skilled and knowledgeable teachers (especially special education teachers), and a clear direction and focus on the school's top priorities.

Documents Related to PLC Implementation

At the time of this report, it is the first part of the 2015–16 school year, so few documents related to PLC implementation were available for analysis. However, the minutes from three math PLC meetings were reviewed, which included information related to the previous and next PLC meetings. The areas discussed included goals related to student assessments, major learning objectives, instructional strategies used to support learning objectives, the successes and challenges of those strategies, changes the teachers would make next time, student assessments that will be used to measure progress towards the learning objectives, and student data for the learning objectives. Two of the three documents were fully completed while the third document was partially completed. A more thorough review may need to be conducted when more documents are available related to PLC implementation in more content areas as PLC meetings occur throughout the school year.

School Climate

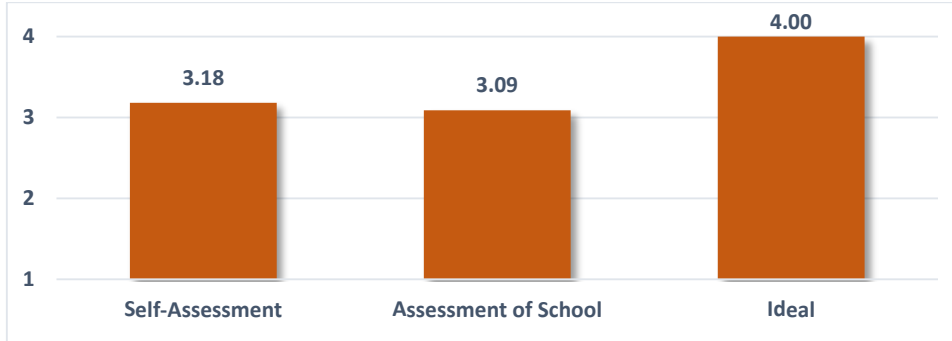
School climate was assessed using three instruments: *Collective Efficacy Scale Short Form* (Goddard, 2002a) (Appendix G), *Omnibus-T Scale* (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003) (Appendix H), and a parent perception survey (The Broad Foundation, 2009) (Appendix I). The *Collective Efficacy Scale Short Form* and *Omnibus-T Scale* were administered to all 35 NVVA staff, including 32 teachers and the three school leaders. The parent perception survey was administered to all parents of high school students, which is approximately 800 parents.

Collective Efficacy Scale Short Form

The *Collective Efficacy Scale Short Form* (Goddard, 2002a) measures collective efficacy in a school, which refers to the perceptions of teachers that the efforts they make will have a positive impact on student learning. Each item was rated on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (*To no extent*) to 4 (*To a great extent*). A total of 31 NVVA staff completed the survey, which is a response rate of 88.6%. A composite mean was calculated for respondents' perceptions of themselves (Self-Assessment bar) as well as of other staff at their school (Assessment of School bar). The ideal column represents the optimal response for each construct. The closer the composite mean is to the ideal value, the more optimal the responses. Figure

7 shows the overall collective efficacy results for NVVA staff.

Figure 7. Collective Efficacy Scale Short Form Results

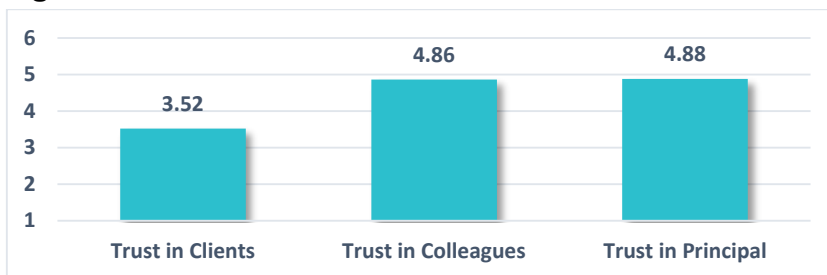


Omnibus T-Scale

The *Omnibus-T Scale* (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 2003), also called the Trust Survey, measures the willingness of a school faculty to be vulnerable with one another based on the confidence that the other is benevolent, reliable, competent, honest, and open (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). Three constructs are assessed with this survey: Trust in Clients, Trust in Principal, and Trust in Colleagues. Each construct measures all five trust facets. Trust in Clients refers to faculty's level of trust in students and parents. Each item is rated on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 6 (*Strongly Agree*).

A total of 31 NVVA staff completed the survey, which is a response rate of 88.6%. For the Trust in Clients, Trust in Principal, and Trust in Colleagues constructs, composite means were calculated. Higher means indicate higher levels of trust. Figure 8 shows the results for NVVA staff.

Figure 8. Omnibus-T Scale Results



Parent Perception Survey

Gathering feedback can provide insights to how key stakeholder groups view the school. It also engages the stakeholder groups to become more supportive of improvements made based on their feedback. A parent perception survey (The Broad Foundation, 2009) was administered to approximately 800 parents of NVVA students in grades 9–12. A total of 117 parents completed the survey, which is a response rate of 14.6%. Four areas are assessed with this survey: school environment, educational program, principal,

and overall perceptions of the school. Results are shown in Figures 9 through 15. Please note that every respondent answered every item; therefore, sample sizes are provided after each item.

Figure 9. School Environment Results

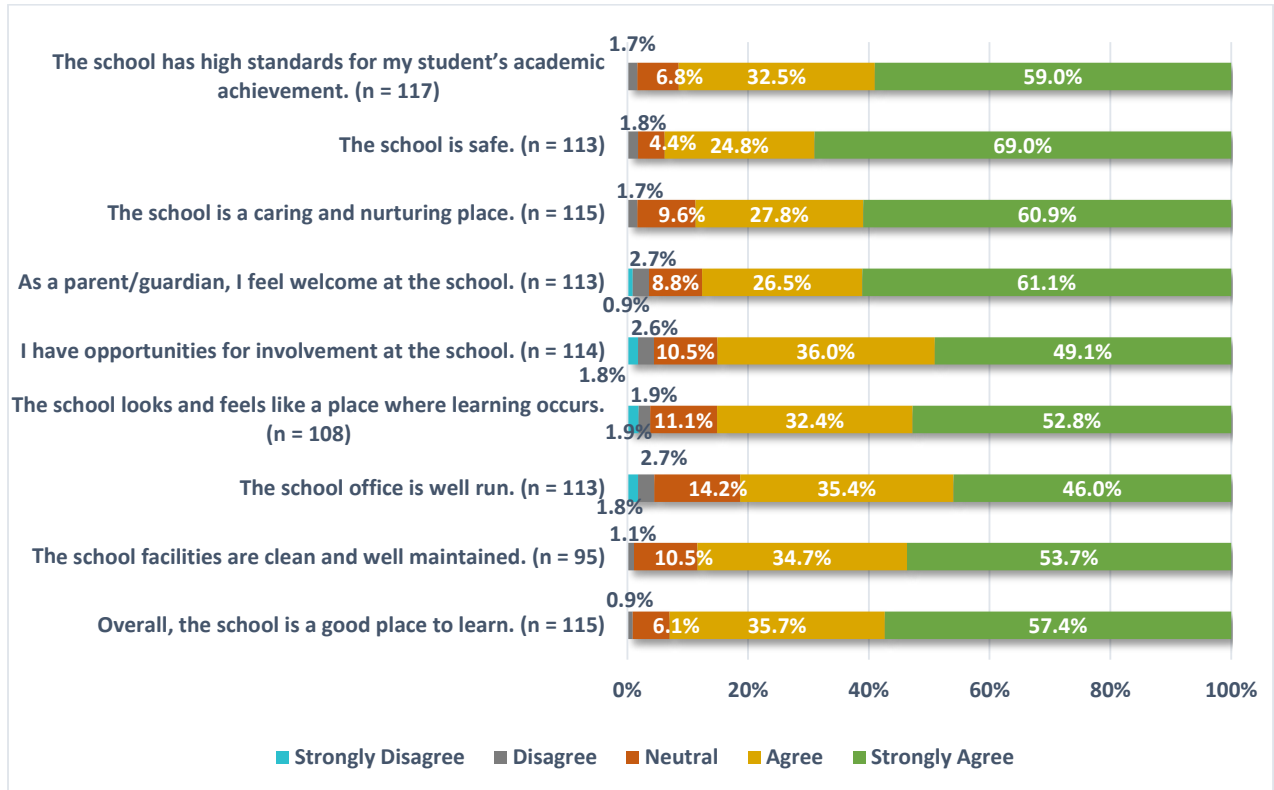


Figure 10. Educational Program Results

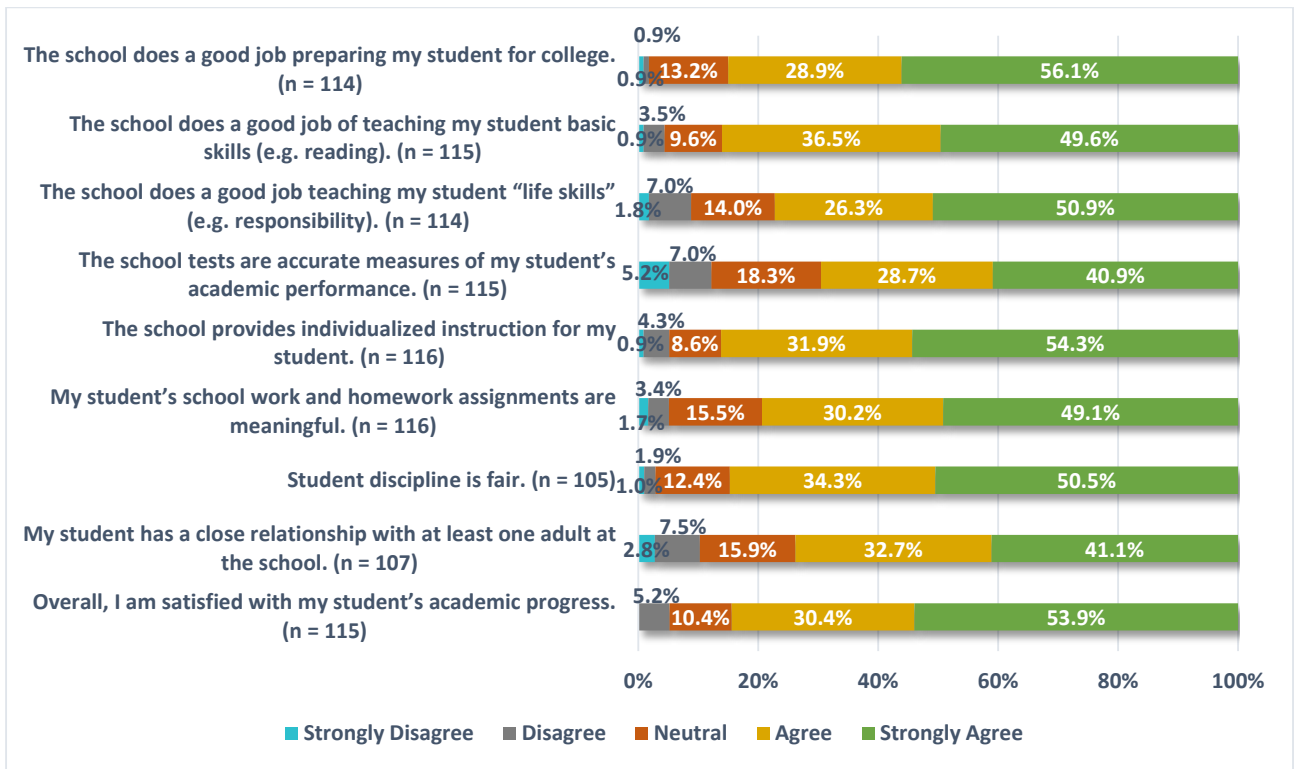


Figure 11. Principal Results

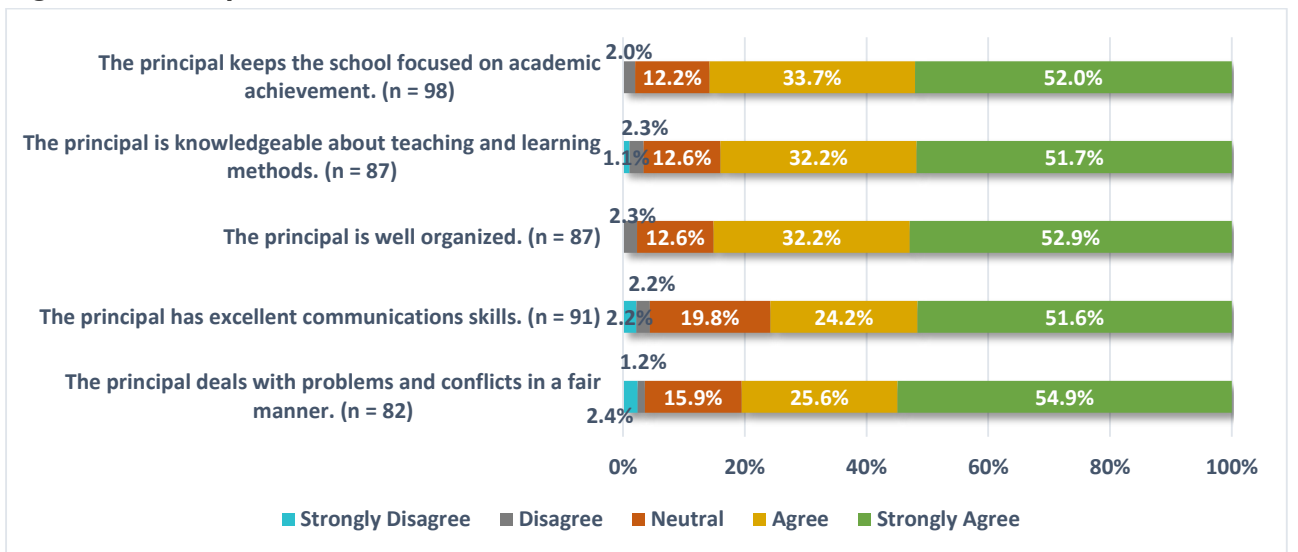


Figure 12. Overall Principal Grade Results (n = 111)

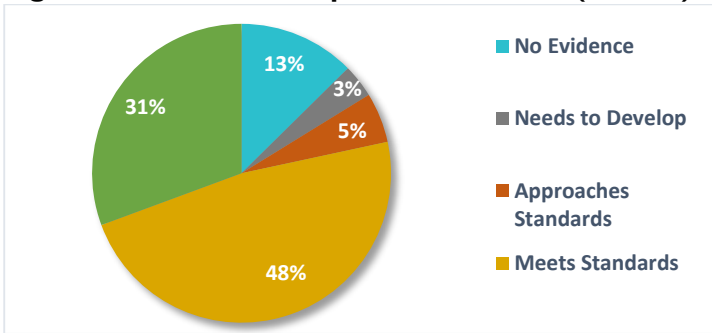


Figure 13. Overall School Grade Results (n = 111)

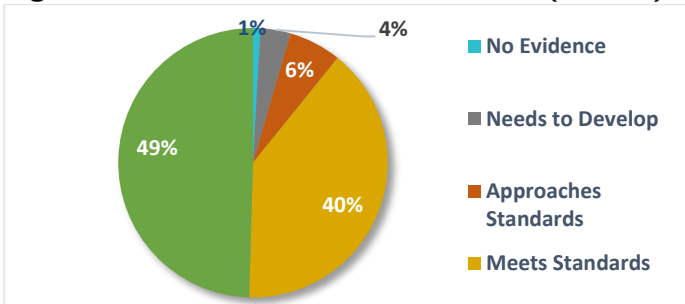


Figure 14. Recommend School Results (n = 113)

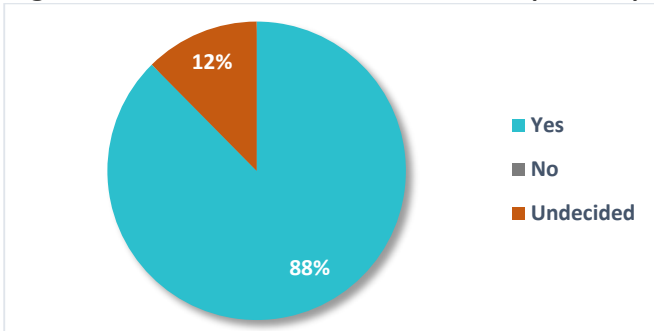
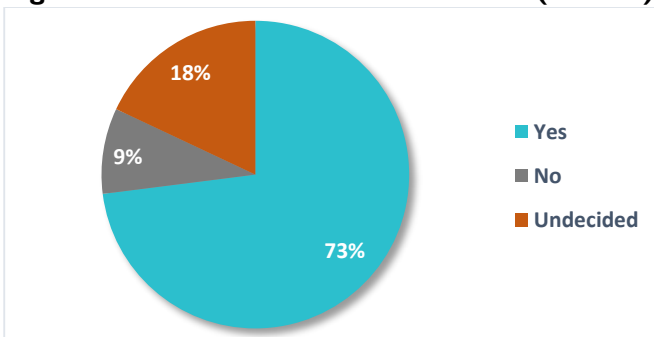


Figure 15. Re-Enroll Your Child Results (n = 111)



If respondents indicated that they would not re-enroll their child at NVVA, they were asked a follow-up question about their reasons. Table 4 provides results of this follow-up question while Table 5 provides specific reasons if the response choices did not capture their reason.

Table 4. Reason for Not Re-Enrolling Child Findings (n = 31)

Why will your child not attend this school next year? (n = 31)	Percentage
Child/family is moving away from area	9.7%
I am not satisfied with the school	12.9%
Child does not want to return	12.9%
Other	64.5%

Table 5. Specific Reasons for Not Re-Enrolling Child

Specific Reason (n = 17)	Number
Graduating	8
Undecided	3
Attend traditional high school	3
Too early to make decision	2
Too much teaching to test	1

Respondents were also asked what they most appreciate about NVVA and what suggestions they have for improving NVVA. Tables 6 and 7 present the themes that emerged from their responses and the number of respondents who indicated it. Please note that some responses applied to numerous themes and therefore were counted twice.

Table 6. Appreciate about NVVA Findings (n = 72)

Themes	Number
Student-paced learning	12
Teacher tracking and following up with students to enhance their learning	7
Blended learning (i.e., tutors, face-to-face learning and support)	7
Flexibility	7
Home learning	6
Individualized instruction	6
Online format (i.e., recorded classes and live help)	6
Ease of communication	6
Teachers care about students	6
Availability of teachers	5
Teaching life skills (i.e., discipline to work independently)	4
Respect towards parents	4
Teacher follow-up with parents	4
Appreciate everything	3

Themes	Number
Availability of school supplies	2
The curriculum	2
Pathways	2
Teacher follows IEP	2
Appreciate nothing	1
Accredited	1
Dual credit	1
Organized	1
Student clubs offered	1

Table 7. Suggested Improvements for NVVA Findings (n =56)

Themes	Number
No suggested improvements	20
Offer more social opportunities and field trips	6
Make website easier to navigate to find things like the school calendar, contact information, and extracurricular opportunities	5
Put due dates on all assignments	4
Notify teachers of students who have IEPs and follow the IEPs	2
Separate honors students/classes from traditional students/classes	2
Focus on core content areas rather than electives	1
Clarify grading system for parents and students	1
More dedication from teachers	1
Offer more one-on-one tutoring in content areas students are struggling with	1
Stop teaching to the test	1
Start a virtual academy in Reno	1
Give parents more information on aim.com	1
Employ teachers who are trained on how to provide an online education	1
Allow students to sign in five minutes ahead of live classes	1
Provide suggestions and discounts for rural families for tutoring	1
Make enrollment an easier process	1
Provide textbooks for Advanced Placement and Honors classes	1
Provide extracurricular opportunities for students not located in Las Vegas	1
Reduce testing to once at the beginning and once at the end of the school year	1
Provide live classes in the morning	1
Return to individualized video lessons	1
Slow down instruction, especially for those students with an IEP	1
More frequent communication from the school (e.g., weekly newsletter)	1
Provide following week's lessons on Fridays	1
Have longer Illuminate sessions	1

Themes	Number
Provide teachers with professional development	1
Pay teachers more	1
Provide supplies (e.g., computers) to students	1

Teacher Effectiveness

Teacher Effectiveness was assessed using four existing data sources: teacher self-audit data from the Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model, student achievement data, additional student-related data, and teacher and school leader professional development data. As mentioned previously, teachers completed a self-audit in the fall 2014 and summer 2015. Data were included for those teachers who were still at NVVA for the 2015–16 school year; thus, data for teachers who did not return to NVVA after the 2014–15 school year were not included in the results. The student achievement data included the HSPE for the 2011–12, 2012–13, 2013–14, and 2014–15 school years. Additional student-related data included: average daily attendance, high school credit deficiency, dropout rate, and graduation rate. The professional development data includes teacher and school leader attendance at conferences, NVVA-procured professional development, and regional professional development for the 2013–14 and 2014–15 school years.

Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model Self-Audit

The Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model is categorized into four domains with numerous elements within each.

Domain I

Domain I relates to classroom strategies and behaviors. Figure 16 presents the results for Domain I Elements 1–3. The design question guiding these elements is: *What will I do to establish and communicate learning goals, track student progress, and celebrate success?*

Figure 16. Domain I Elements 1–3 Results

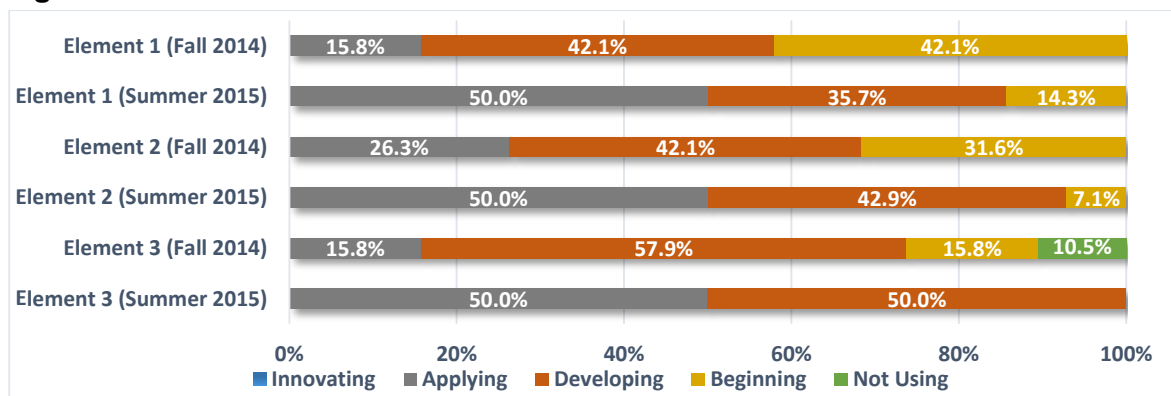


Figure 17 presents the results for Domain I Elements 6, 9, 11–13, 15, and 19–20. The design question guiding these elements is: *What will I do to help students effectively interact with new knowledge?*

Figure 17. Domain I Elements 6, 9, 11–13, 15, and 19–23 Results

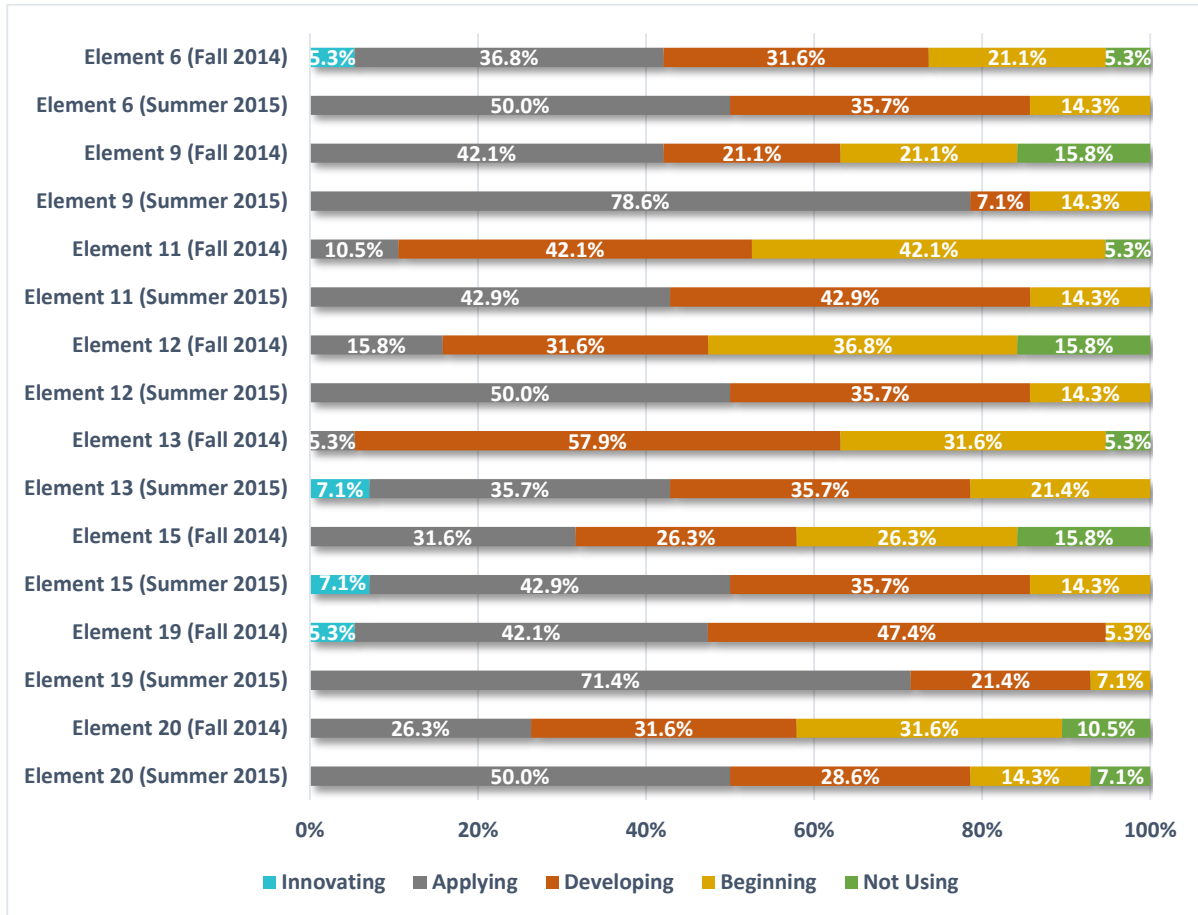
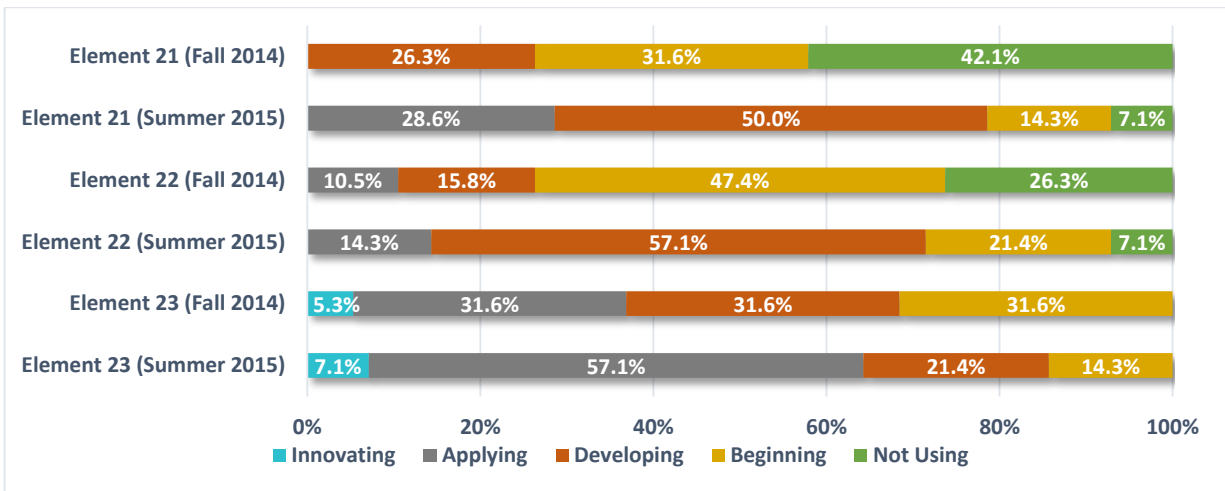


Figure 18 presents the results for Domain I Elements 21–23. The design question guiding these elements is: *What will I do to help students generate and test hypotheses about new knowledge?*

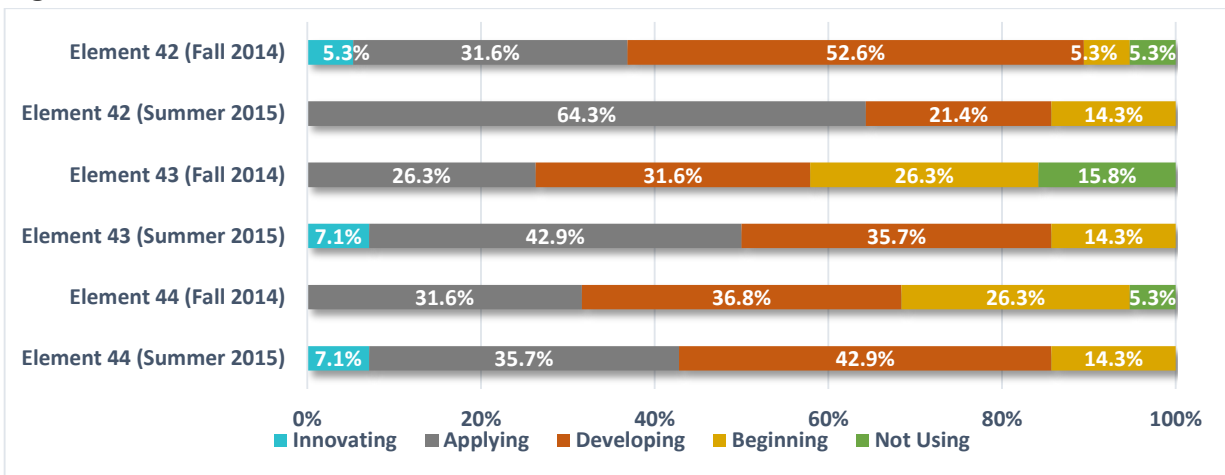
Figure 18. Domain I Elements 21–23 Results



Domain 2

Domain 2 relates to teacher planning and preparing for instruction. Figure 19 presents the results for Domain 2 Elements 42–44.

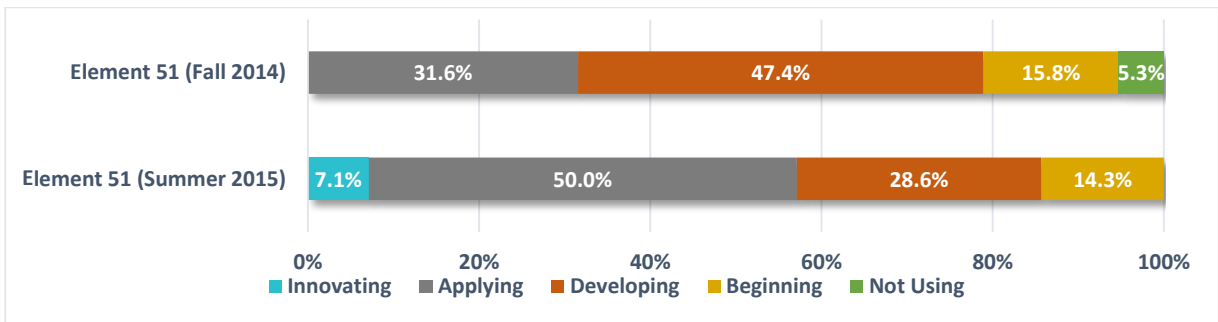
Figure 19. Domain 2 Elements 42–44 Results



Domain 3

Domain 3 relates to teacher reflection on their instruction. Figure 20 presents the results for Domain 3 Element 51.

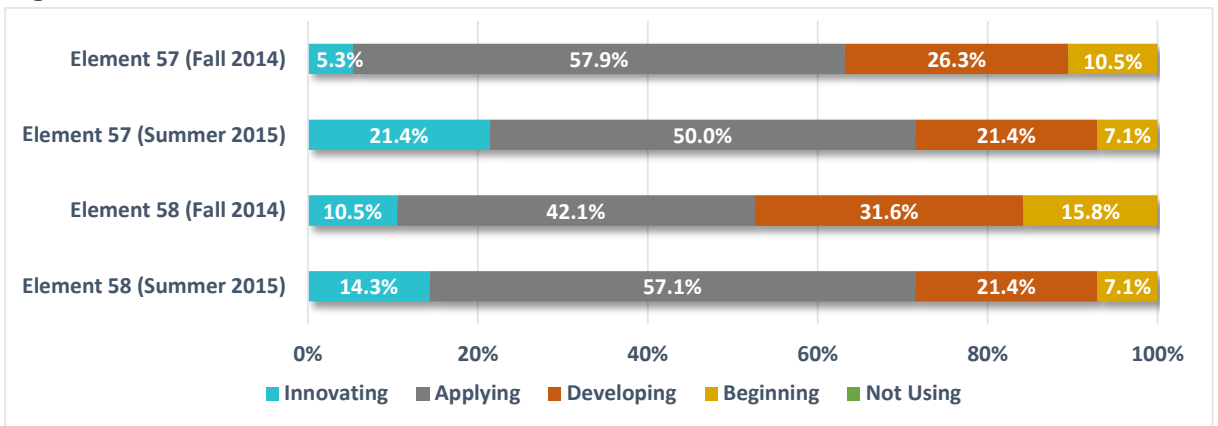
Figure 20. Domain 3 Element 51 Results



Domain 4

Domain 4 relates to collegiality and professionalism. Figure 21 presents the results for Domain 4 Elements 57 and 58.

Figure 21. Domain 4 Element 57–58 Results



Student Achievement

The HSPE is administered to students while they are in grade II. To be considered proficient and eligible for a Nevada high school diploma, students must score “meets standard” or above on the HSPE in the content areas of math, reading, writing, and science. The following results are for Nevada as the “State” as well as NVVA students. The NVVA students are further disaggregated by student gender, ethnicity, individualized learning plan (IEP) status, and free/reduced lunch (FRL) status for the 2011–2012, 2012–2013, 2013–2014, and 2014–2015 school years.

Math

Table 8 shows the total number of State students and NVVA students and the corresponding percentage of those students tested in math for the 2011–2012, 2012–2013, 2013–2014, and 2014–2015 academic years. Figure 22 displays the percentage of those students who are proficient in math.

Table 8. Total Number of Grade II Students and Percentage Tested in Math

Year	State		NVVA	
	Students	Proficient	Students	Proficient
2011-2012	31183	98.5%	235	89.4%
2012-2013	31096	98.2%	374	97.9%
2013-2014	31471	97.5%	230	97.4%
2014-2015	32238	97.0%	135	97.0%

Figure 22. Percentage of Tested Students Proficient in Math

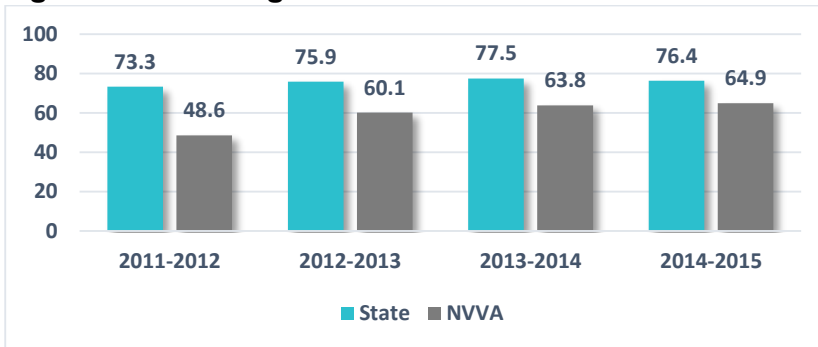


Table 9 provides information about the total number of NVVA students, NVVA students disaggregated by gender and ethnicity, and the corresponding percentages of those students tested in math for the 2011–2012, 2012–2013, 2013–2014, and 2014–2015 academic years. Figure 23 displays the percentage of those students who are proficient in math. Please note that there are no results for students who are American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, or Pacific Islander, and there are no results for students who are Black in the 2014–2015 academic year because there were fewer than 20 students, and results are not reported for sample sizes of fewer than 20 students.

Table 9. Total Number of Grade II Students and Percentage Tested in Math by Gender and Ethnicity

Year	NVVA		Female		Male		Black		Hispanic		White	
	Students	Proficient	Students	Proficient	Students	Proficient	Students	Proficient	Students	Proficient	Students	Proficient
2011-2012	235	89.4%	143	90.2%	92	88.0%	28	85.7%	32	90.6%	160	91.9%
2012-2013	374	97.9%	204	98.0%	170	97.6%	37	97.3%	67	95.5%	239	98.7%
2013-2014	230	97.4%	126	96.8%	104	98.1%	27	96.3%	33	93.9%	154	98.1%
2014-2015	135	97.0%	78	96.2%	57	98.2%			32	96.9%	80	98.8%

Figure 23. Percentage of Tested Students Proficient in Math by Gender and Ethnicity

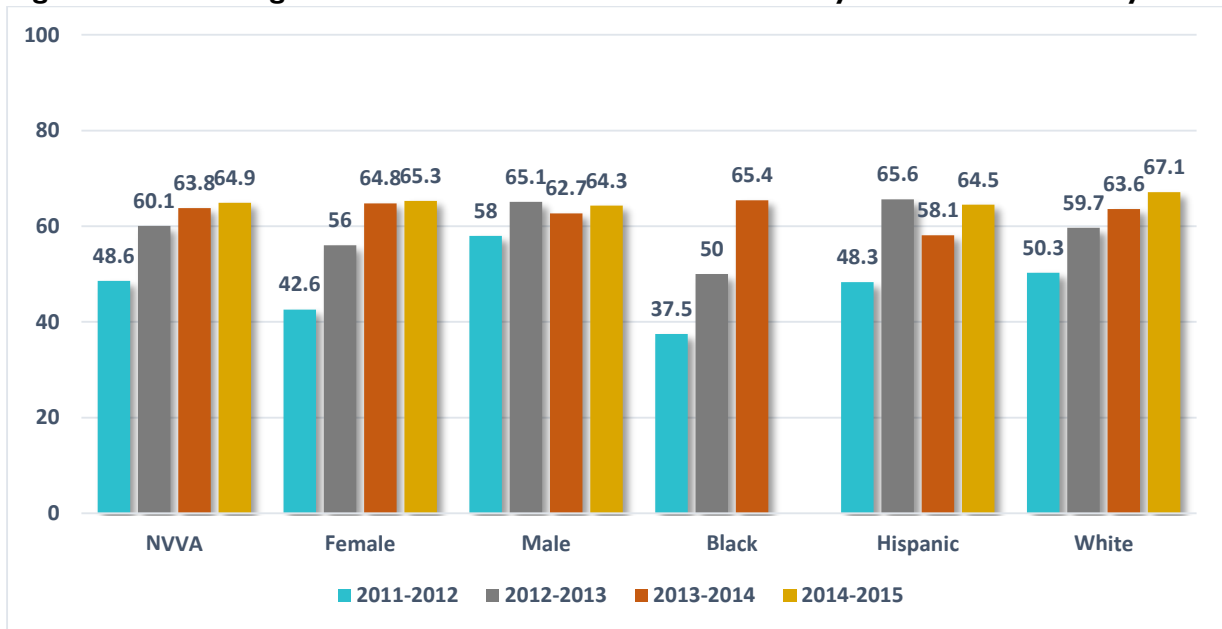
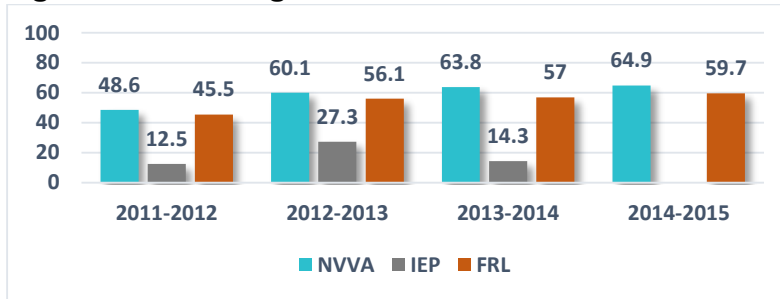


Table 10 provides information about the total number of NVVA students, NVVA students disaggregated by IEP and FRL eligibility, and the corresponding percentage of those students tested in math for the 2011–2012, 2012–2013, 2013–2014, and 2014–2015 academic years. Figure 24 displays the percentage of those students who are proficient in math. Please note that there are no results for students who had an IEP in the 2014–2015 academic year because there were fewer than 20 students, and results are not reported for sample sizes of fewer than 20 students.

Table 10. Total Number of Grade II Students and Percentage Tested in Math by IEP Status and FRL Status

Year	NVVA		IEP		FRL	
2011-2012	235	89.4%	24	100.0%	119	92.4%
2012-2013	374	97.9%	34	97.1%	168	97.6%
2013-2014	230	97.4%	30	93.3%	109	98.2%
2014-2015	135	97.0%	118	97.5%	70	95.7%

Figure 24. Percentage of Tested Students Proficient in Math by IEP Status and FRL Status



Reading

Table II provides information about the total number of State students and NVVA students and the corresponding percentages of those students tested in reading for the 2011–2012, 2012–2013, 2013–2014, and 2014–2015 academic years. Figure 25 displays the percentage of those students who are proficient in reading.

Table II. Total Number of Grade II Students and Percentage Tested in Reading

Year	State		NVVA	
2011-2012	31183	98.3%	235	88.5%
2012-2013	31096	98.2%	374	97.6%
2013-2014	31471	97.5%	230	98.3%
2014-2015	32238	96.9%	135	97.8%

Figure 25. Percentage of Tested Students Proficient in Reading

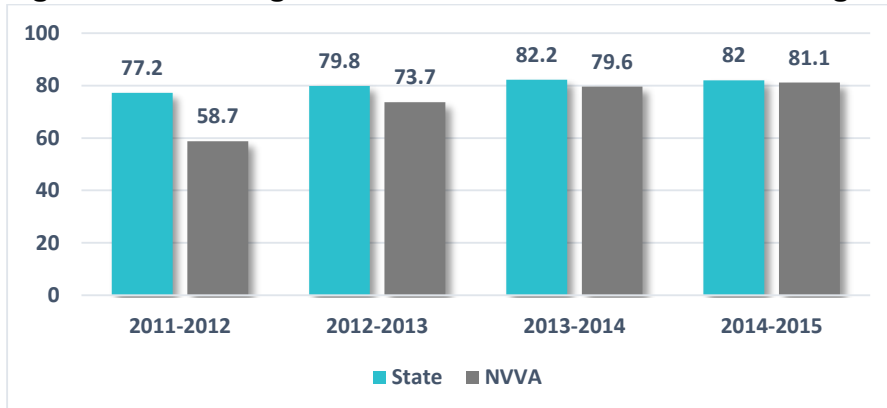


Table 12 provides information about the total number of NVVA students, NVVA students disaggregated by gender and ethnicity, and the corresponding percentage of those students tested in reading for the 2011–2012, 2012–2013, 2013–2014, and 2014–2015 academic years. Figure 26 displays the percentage of those students who are proficient in reading. Please note that there are no results for students who are American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, or Pacific Islander, and there are no results for students who

are Black in the 2014–2015 academic year because there were fewer than 20 students, and results are not reported for sample sizes of fewer than 20 students.

Table 12. Total Number of Grade II Students and Percentage Tested in Reading by Gender and Ethnicity

Year	NVVA		Female		Male		Black		Hispanic		White	
2011-2012	235	88.5%	143	86.7%	92	91.3%	28	89.3%	32	87.5%	160	88.8%
2012-2013	374	97.6%	204	97.1%	170	98.2%	37	97.3%	67	95.5%	239	98.3%
2013-2014	230	98.3%	126	98.4%	104	98.1%	27	96.3%	33	97.0%	154	99.4%
2014-2015	135	97.8%	78	97.4%	57	98.2%			32	100.0%	80	100.0%

Figure 26. Percentage of Tested Students Proficient in Reading by Gender and Ethnicity

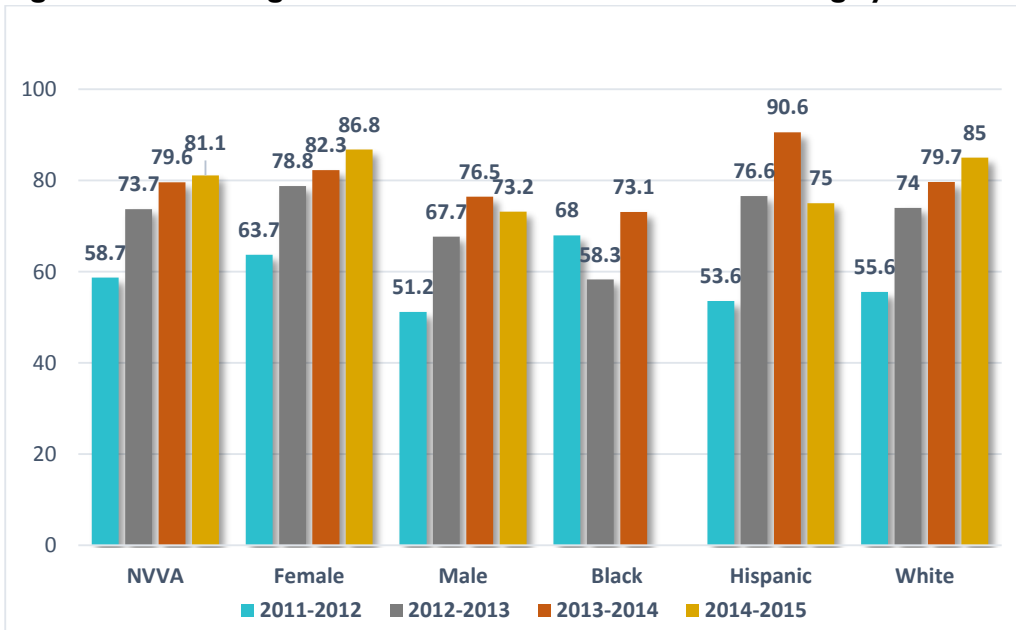
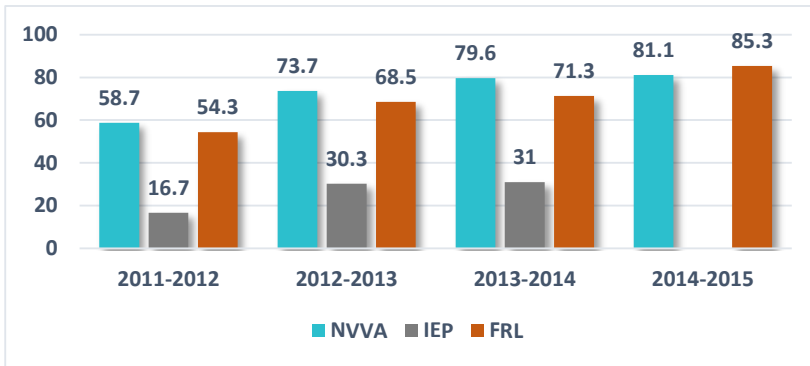


Table 13 provides information about the total number of NVVA students, NVVA students disaggregated by IEP and FRL eligibility, and the corresponding percentages of those students tested in reading for the 2011–2012, 2012–2013, 2013–2014, and 2014–2015 academic years. Figure 27 displays the percentages of those students who are proficient in reading. Please note that there are no results for students who had an IEP in the 2014–2015 academic year because there were fewer than 20 students, and results are not reported for sample sizes of fewer than 20 students.

Table 13. Total Number of Grade II Students and Percentage Tested in Reading by IEP Status and FRL Status

Year	NVVA		IEP		FRL	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
2011-2012	235	88.5%	24	100.0%	119	88.2%
2012-2013	374	97.6%	34	97.1%	168	98.2%
2013-2014	230	98.3%	30	96.7%	109	99.1%
2014-2015	135	97.8%			70	97.1%

Figure 27. Percentage of Tested Students Proficient in Reading by IEP Status and FRL Status



Writing

Table 14 provides information about the total number of State students and NVVA students and the corresponding percentages of those students tested in writing for the 2011–2012, 2012–2013, 2013–2014, and 2014–2015 academic years. Figure 28 displays the percentage of those students who are proficient in writing.

Table 14. Total Number of Grade II Students and Percentage Tested in Writing

Year	State		NVVA	
	Count	%	Count	%
2011-2012	31183	98.0%	235	95.7%
2012-2013	31096	96.5%	374	93.9%
2013-2014	31471	96.4%	230	96.5%
2014-2015	32238	95.7%	135	98.5%

Figure 28. Percentage of Tested Students Proficient in Writing

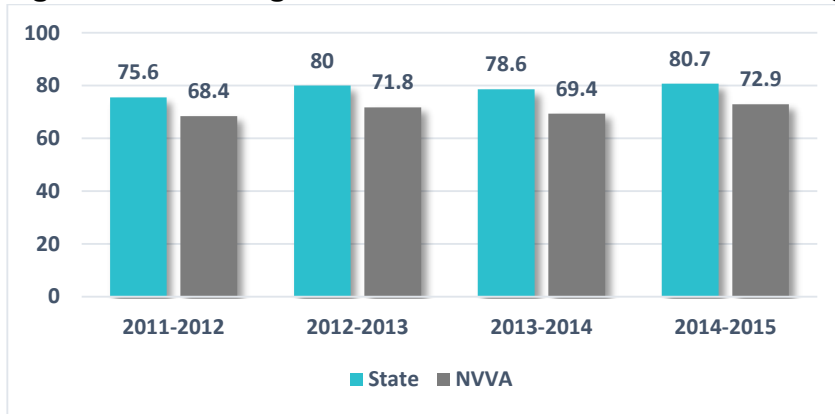


Table 15 provides information about the total number of NVVA students, NVVA students disaggregated by gender and ethnicity, and the corresponding percentages of those students tested in writing for the 2011–2012, 2012–2013, 2013–2014, and 2014–2015 academic years. Figure 29 displays the percentages of those students who are proficient in writing. Please note that there are no results for students who are American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, or Pacific Islander, and there are no results for students who are Black in the 2014–2015 academic year because there were fewer than 20 students, and results are not reported for sample sizes of fewer than 20 students.

Table 15. Total Number of Grade II Students and Percentage Tested in Writing by Gender and Ethnicity

Year	NVVA		Female		Male		Black		Hispanic		White	
2011-2012	235	95.7%	143	96.5%	92	94.6%	28	96.4%	32	93.8%	160	96.9%
2012-2013	374	93.9%	204	93.6%	170	94.1%	37	89.2%	67	89.6%	239	95.8%
2013-2014	230	96.5%	126	97.6%	104	95.2%	27	92.6%	33	93.9%	154	98.1%
2014-2015	135	98.5%	78	97.4%	57	100.0%			32	96.9%	80	100.0%

Figure 29. Percentage of Tested Students Proficient in Writing by Gender and Ethnicity

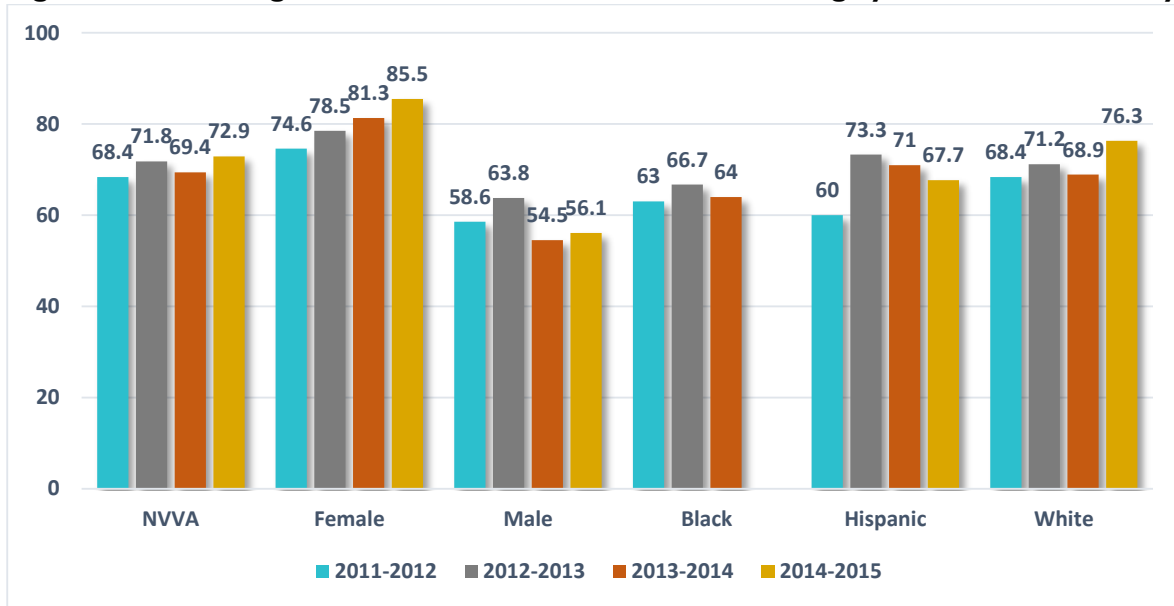
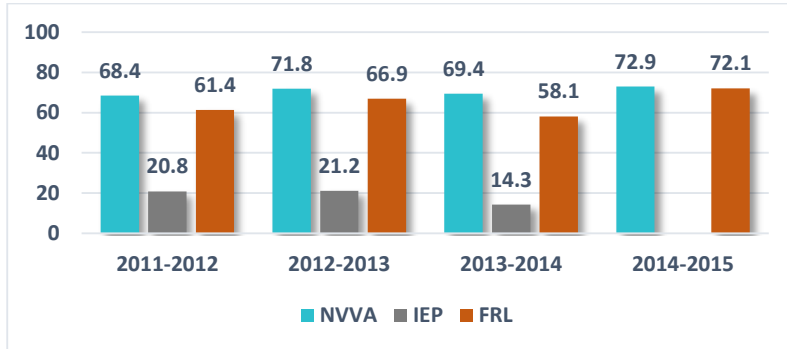


Table 16 provides information about the total number of NVVA students, NVVA students disaggregated by IEP and FRL eligibility, and the corresponding percentages of those students tested in writing for the 2011–2012, 2012–2013, 2013–2014, and 2014–2015 academic years. Figure 30 displays the percentage of those students who are proficient in writing. Please note that there are no results for students who had an IEP in the 2014–2015 academic year because there were fewer than 20 students, and results are not reported for sample sizes of fewer than 20 students.

Table 16. Total Number of Grade II Students and Percentage Tested in Writing by IEP Status and FRL Status

Year	NVVA		IEP		FRL	
2011-2012	235	95.7%	24	100.0%	119	95.8%
2012-2013	374	93.9%	34	97.1%	168	93.5%
2013-2014	230	96.5%	30	93.3%	109	97.2%
2014-2015	135	98.5%			70	97.1%

Figure 30. Percentage of Tested Students Proficient in Writing by IEP Status and FRL Status



Science

Table 17 provides information about the total number of State students and NVVA students and the corresponding percentages of those students tested in science for the 2011–2012, 2012–2013, 2013–2014, and 2014–2015 academic years. Figure 31 displays the percentages of those students who are proficient in science.

Table 17. Total Number of Grade II Students and Percentage Tested in Science

Year	State		NVVA	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
2011-2012	31183	97.6%	235	86.8%
2012-2013	31096	96.8%	374	75.9%
2013-2014	31471	97.3%	230	97.0%
2014-2015	32238	96.9%	135	95.6%

Figure 31. Percentage of Tested Students Proficient in Science

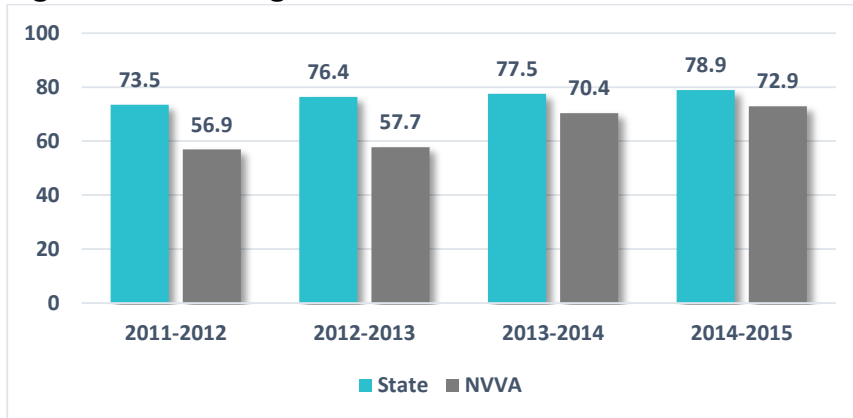


Table 18 provides information about the total number of NVVA students, NVVA students disaggregated by gender and ethnicity, and the corresponding percentage of those students tested in science for the 2011–2012, 2012–2013, 2013–2014, and 2014–2015 academic years. Figure 32 displays the percentages

of those students who are proficient in science. Please note that there are no results for students who are American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian, or Pacific Islander, and there are no results for students who are Black in the 2014–2015 academic year because there were fewer than 20 students, and results are not reported for sample sizes of fewer than 20 students.

Table 18. Total Number of Grade II Students and Percentage Tested in Science by Gender and Ethnicity

Year	NVVA		Female		Male		Black		Hispanic		White	
2011-2012	235	86.8%	143	85.3%	92	89.1%	28	89.3%	32	90.6%	160	85.6%
2012-2013	374	75.9%	204	82.8%	170	67.6%	37	78.4%	67	70.1%	239	77.8%
2013-2014	230	97.0%	126	97.6%	104	96.2%	27	96.3%	33	93.9%	154	98.1%
2014-2015	135	95.6%	78	94.9%	57	96.5%			32	96.9%	80	98.8%

Figure 32. Percentage of Tested Students Proficient in Science by Gender and Ethnicity

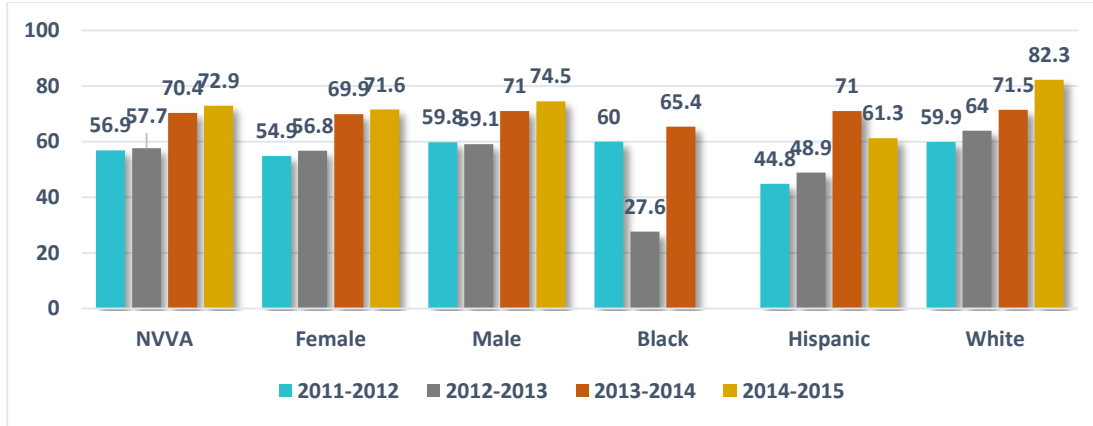
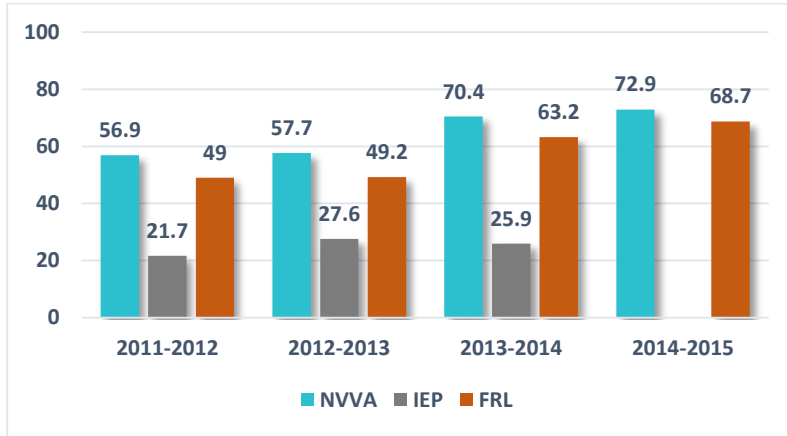


Table 19 provides information about the total number of NVVA students, NVVA students disaggregated by IEP and FRL eligibility, and the corresponding percentages of those students tested in science for the 2011–2012, 2012–2013, 2013–2014, and 2014–2015 academic years. Figure 33 displays the percentages of those students who are proficient in science. Please note that there are no results for students who had an IEP in the 2014–2015 academic year because there were fewer than 20 students, and results are not reported for sample sizes of fewer than 20 students.

Table 19. Total Number of Grade II Students and Percentage Tested in Science by IEP Status and FRL Status

Year	NVVA		IEP		FRL	
2011-2012	235	86.8%	24	95.8%	119	87.4%
2012-2013	374	75.9%	34	85.3%	168	77.4%
2013-2014	230	97.0%	30	90.0%	109	97.2%
2014-2015	135	95.6%			70	95.7%

Figure 33. Percentage of Tested Students Proficient in Science by IEP Status and FRL Status

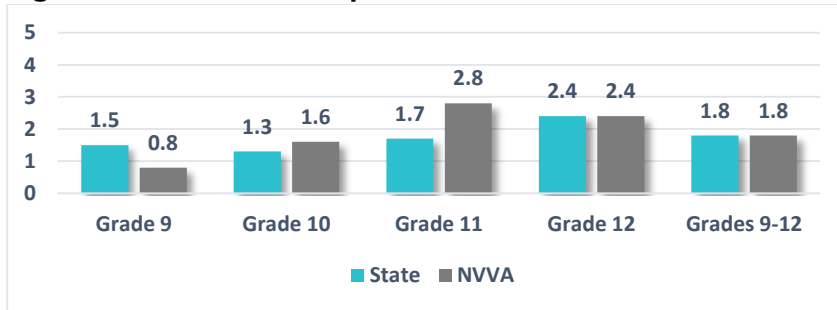


Additional Student-Related Data

Dropout Rate

The 2014–2015 school year was the first year that dropout rate was required for the Nevada Annual Reports of Accountability. In previous years, these results were optional. To ensure consistency across the state, the Nevada Department of Education collected these data as a uniform assignment for all schools. Thus, the dropout rate was provided by the state. Figure 34 presents the dropout rates for the state of Nevada as well as NVVA.

Figure 34. 2014–2015 Dropout Rate for the State and NVVA



Graduation Rate

The graduation rate is calculated by dividing the total number of graduates by the total number of students minus transfer students. For example, there were a total of 158 female students in the 2011–2012 school year, with 111 of those students transferring out of NVVA, which left 47 female students. Of those students, 21 graduated; therefore, 44.7% of female students graduated. Table 20 provides

information about the total number of NVVA students minus the transfer students disaggregated by gender and ethnicity for the 2011–2012, 2012–2013, 2013–2014, and 2014–2015 academic years. Figure

35 displays the percentages of those students who graduated. Please note that there are no results for students who are male for the 2011–2012 academic year; who are Black for the 2011–2012, 2012–2013, and 2013–2014 academic years; or, who are Hispanic for the 2011–2012 and 2012–2013 academic years. This is because there were fewer than 20 students, and results are not reported for sample sizes of fewer than 20 students.

Table 20. Total Number of Students Minus Transfer Students

Year	NVVA	Female	Male	Black	Hispanic	White
2011-2012	77	47	30	10	10	51
2012-2013	186	112	74	24	25	118
2013-2014	218	122	96	22	31	146
2014-2015	242	134	108	22	27	171

Figure 35. Percentage of Students Who Graduated by Gender and Ethnicity

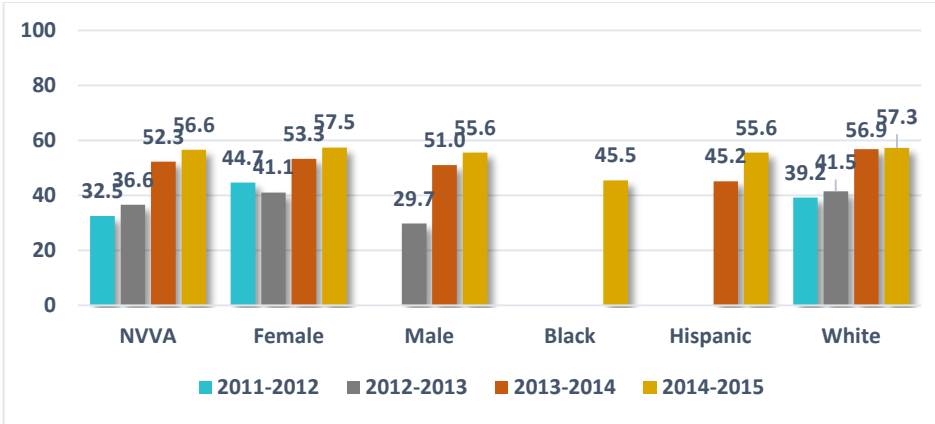
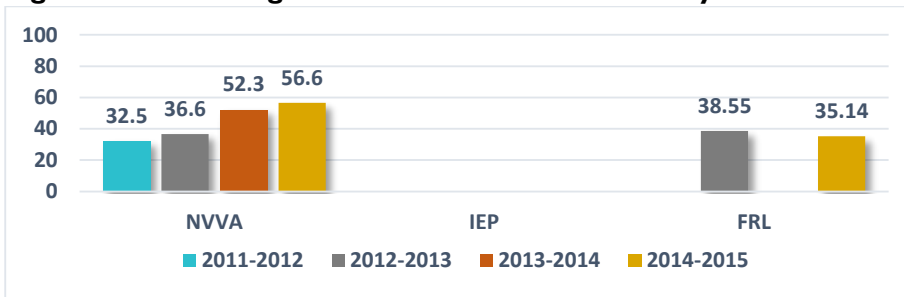


Table 21 provides information about the total number of NVVA students minus the transfer students disaggregated by IEP and FRL eligibility for the 2011–2012, 2012–2013, 2013–2014, and 2014–2015 academic years. Figure 36 displays the percentages of those students who graduated. Please note that there are no results for students who had an IEP for the 2011–2012, 2012–2013, 2013–2014, and 2014–2015 academic years or students who are eligible for FRL for the 2011–2012 and 2013–2014 academic years. This is because there were fewer than 20 students, and results are not reported for sample sizes of fewer than 20 students.

Table 21. Total Number of Students Minus Transfer Students

Year	NVVA	IEP	FRL
2011-2012	77	5	28
2012-2013	186	11	83
2013-2014	218	14	33
2014-2015	242	14	37

Figure 36. Percentage of Students who Graduated by IEP Status and FRL Status



High School Credit Deficiency

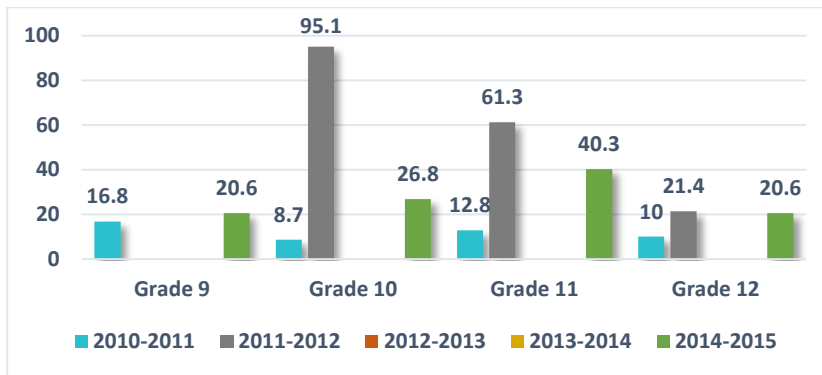
In the 2014–2015 school year, credit deficiency data were collected for every grade; prior to the 2014–15 school year, credit deficiency data were not collected for every grade. *High school credit deficiency* is defined differently for each grade. For students in grade 9, credit deficiency is having less than five credits by the end of the school year. For students in grade 10, credit deficiency is obtaining less than 11 credits by end of the school year. For students in grade 11, credit deficiency is having less than 17 credits by the end of the school year. For students in grade 12, credit deficiency is obtaining less than 22.5 credits by the end of the school year. Credit deficiency is calculated by taking the number of students below credits divided by the total number of students in the grade at the end of the school year.

Table 22 shows the number of NVVA students by grade that were credit deficient for the 2010–2011, 2011–2012, 2012–2013, 2013–2014, and 2014–2015 academic years. Figure 37 displays the percentages of students who were credit deficient. Please note that there are no results for the 2012–2013 and 2013–2014 academic years.

Table 22. Number of Credit Deficient Students by Grade

Year	9	10	11	12
2010-2011	41	23	24	14
2011-2012		309	263	55
2012-2013				
2013-2014				
2014-2015	56	55	64	33

Figure 37. Percentage of Credit Deficient Students by Grade



Professional Development

NVVA teachers participate in and attend professional development (PD) throughout the school year. Table 23 provides the number of teachers who engaged in PD during the 2013–2014 and 2014–2015 school years.

Table 23. Number of NVVA Teachers Participating in Professional Development

	2013-14	2014-15
Model Schools (International Center for Leadership in Education [ICLE] Conference)	9	
Professional Learning Communities (Solution Tree)	30	
Co-Teaching (Fitzell)	50	
Academic Coaching (Global Results for Coaching)		15
<i>Art and Science of Teaching</i> (Marzano)		50
ACT State Conference	45	20
Title I Annual Conference	3	
Advanced Placement Conference	2	1
ASCD Annual Conference	5	
Flipped Classroom (book study)	45	
Common Core State Standards (ICLE)	50	
Council for Exceptional Children Conference	2	5

Conclusion

This section provides conclusions based on the data results provided in this report for each of the six Nevada Department of Education requirements: school leadership, school infrastructure, Tier I instruction aligned to state standards, PLC effectiveness, school climate, and teacher effectiveness.

School Leadership

For school leadership, the results of the *Principals' Sense of Efficacy Scale* (Tschannen-Moran & Gareis,

2004) and *Leadership Team Self-Assessment* indicated high levels of principal self-efficacy and self-perceptions of the leadership team, respectively. The lowest results were on the “efficacy for moral leadership” construct of the *Principals’ Sense of Efficacy Scale* and “staff supports decisions” item of the *Leadership Team Self-Assessment*. This could mean that higher levels of communication with NVVA staff related to decisions made by NVVA leaders are needed to promote shared leadership among all staff and provide opportunities for ownership of decisions. The NVVA school leaders also participated in numerous PD opportunities, such as conferences and a book study.

School Infrastructure

School infrastructure is described as the alignment of the Common Core State Standards, the NVVA curriculum as provided by K¹², teacher instruction, student assessments, and teacher professional development in the *Nevada Plan to Ensure Equitable Access to Excellent Educators* (Nevada Department of Education, 2015). The school leader interview findings indicate that there are high levels of alignment between the Common Core State Standards and the K¹² curriculum; the K¹² curriculum and teacher instruction; and the annual student assessment and teacher professional development. A moderate level of alignment exists between the K¹² curriculum and the annual student assessment. Further, there are no K¹² or NVVA policies related to the alignment of the school infrastructure components. However, the PLC structure attempts to improve the alignment and fill the gaps between the K¹² curriculum and the annual student assessment. Additionally, there is a sense from the school leaders that teachers may lack ownership of the curriculum contents since the K¹² curriculum is provided to the NVVA. The NVVA school leaders believe that the Common Core State Standards should drive instruction while the curriculum should be used as a tool to facilitate instruction.

Tier I Instruction Aligned to State Standards

Results from select elements of Domains 1 and 2 (classroom strategies and behaviors and planning and preparing) of the Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model teacher self-audit were used to assess Tier I instruction aligned to state standards. The results indicated teachers ranked themselves at a higher level of implementation of the elements at the end of the 2014–2015 school year than they did at the beginning of the 2014–2015 school year. By the end of the 2014–2015 school year, half of the teachers were applying the elements of Domain 1, which is related to classroom strategies and behaviors, and approximately 35% to 65% of the teachers were applying the elements of Domain 2, which is related to planning and preparing for instruction. Since this was self-perception data, teacher observations conducted by NVVA school leaders would have yielded more objective data and been ideal to assess Tier I instruction aligned to state standards. In the 2015–16 school year, the Nevada Educator Performance Framework (NEPF) will be used in schools throughout the state and in the NVVA. NEPF teacher observation data from select standards and indicators could be used to assess Tier I instruction aligned to state standards for the 2015–2016 school year.

PLC Effectiveness

Findings from the teacher focus group and school leader interviews related to PLC effectiveness indicated that NVVA teachers and school leaders have similar perspectives related to PLCs. Teachers perceived less structure for PLCs in the 2015–16 school year than in the 2014–2015 school year, especially in the non-core, elective content areas, and they indicated a need for more communication about the direction of the school, and more guidance on school-level initiatives and how to use student data to inform instruction. Likewise, the school leaders indicated that applying the necessary interventions to support student learning based on data is a need for NVVA teachers. Additionally, the teachers believed the greatest strengths of PLCs are the teachers' willingness to participate in them, be open and honest with one another, help and collaborate with one another, and try new ideas. Similarly, the NVVA school leaders also believed that the greatest strength was the teacher commitment and dedication to the PLC concept. The teachers perceived the biggest challenges are that some content areas have only one teacher and a lack of school focus and direction. The school leaders agreed with the lack of clear direction for the school. Further, the teachers and school leaders believed that the change that would have the greatest positive impact on PLC effectiveness is providing focus and direction on the school's top 3–5 initiatives.

School Climate

For school climate, the results of the *Collective Efficacy Scale Short Form* (Goddard, 2002a) and *Omnibus T-Scale* (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999) indicated high levels of collective efficacy for NVVA staff as well as trust in colleagues and the principal, respectively. The lowest result was for trust in clients, or students and parents. A contributing factor could be the virtual learning environment of the school. However, the parent perception survey results indicated high levels of agreement with items related to the school environment, educational program, and the principal. Parents also had positive overall perceptions of NVVA. Parents offered their perspective on what they appreciate about the school and suggested improvements for the school; however, given the response rate, the results should be used cautiously. Further, it is typical practice to administer a perception survey to parents annually to see longitudinal trends.

Teacher Effectiveness

The Marzano Teacher Evaluation Model teacher self-audit, student achievement data, other student-related outcomes, and teacher professional development were used to assess teacher effectiveness. The results indicated teachers ranked themselves at a higher level of implementation of the elements at the end of the 2014–2015 school year than they did at the beginning of the 2014–2015 school year. By the end of the 2014–2015 school year, approximately 14% to 78% of the teachers were applying the elements of Domain 1, which is related to classroom strategies and behaviors, and approximately 35% to 65% of the teachers were applying the elements of Domain 2, which is related to planning and preparing for instruction. For Domain 3, half of the teachers were applying the elements, which indicate

that they reflected on their instruction by the end of the 2014–2015 school year. For Domain 4, more than 70% of the teachers were applying or innovating the elements, meaning they were professional and collegial with their colleagues. Similar to the alignment between Tier I instruction and standards explained on page 39, teacher observations conducted by NVVA school leaders would have yielded more objective data than self-perception data and been ideal to assess teacher effectiveness. NEPF teacher observation data could be used to partially assess teacher effectiveness for the 2015–2016 school year.

Additionally, HSPE results for each subject across the previous four school years (2011–2012 to 2014–2015) were examined. For math, the percent proficient for NVVA students (about 65% proficient) was lower than that for the state in the 2014–2015 school year. NVVA female and male students were comparable to each other (approximately 65% proficient) in the 2014–2015 school year. NVVA Black, Hispanic, and White students increased proficiency percentages over time, with Black students making bigger gains (37.5% to 65.4% proficient from 2011–2012 to 2013–2014 school year²) than Hispanic and White students, who were at approximately 65% proficient in 2014–2015 school year. NVVA students with IEPs had the lowest proficiency percentages, at 14.3% proficient in the 2013–2014 school year³. NVVA students who were eligible for FRL increased proficiency percentages over time and were almost 60% proficient in the 2014–2015 school year.

For HPSE reading, the percent proficient of NVVA students (80% proficient) was comparable to that for the state (81% proficient) in the past two school years. NVVA female students had higher proficiency percentages than NVVA male students, with more than 80% proficiency for females and more than 70% proficiency for males. NVVA Black and Hispanic students varied in their proficiency percentages, ranging from 68% to 58% to 73% proficiency for Black students⁴ and from 54% to 77% to 91% to 75% for Hispanic students, while NVVA white students steadily increased their proficiency percentages over time from 56% to 74% to 80% to 85% proficiency. NVVA students with IEPs had the lowest proficiency percentages, at 31% proficiency in the 2013–2014 school year⁵, while NVVA students who were eligible for FRL increased proficiency percentages over time, from 54% to 85% proficiency.

For HSPE writing, the percent proficient of NVVA students (70% proficient) was slightly lower than that for the state (80% proficient). NVVA female students had much higher proficiency percentages, at 81–85% proficient, than NVVA male students, at about 55% proficient. NVVA Black and White students remained somewhat steady over time, at about 65% proficient and about 70% proficient, respectively,

² HPSE math results were not reported for NVVA Black students in the 2014–2015 school year due to a sample size of fewer than 20 students.

³ HPSE math results were not reported for NVVA students with IEPs in the 2014–2015 school year due to a sample size of fewer than 20 students.

⁴ HPSE reading results were not reported for NVVA Black students in the 2014–2015 school year due to a sample size of fewer than 20 students.

⁵ HPSE reading results were not reported for NVVA students with IEPs in the 2014–2015 school year due to a sample size of fewer than 20 students.

while NVVA Hispanic students varied in their proficiency percentages over time, from 60% to 73% to 71% to 68% proficiency. NVVA students with IEPs had the lowest proficiency percentages, at about 14% proficiency, and NVVA students who were eligible for FRL varied in their proficiency percentages over time, from 61% to 67% to 58% to 72% proficiency.

For HSPE science, the percent proficient for NVVA students (about 71% proficient) was lower than that for the state (about 78% proficient). NVVA female and male students were comparable to each other at about 70% proficient. NVVA Black, Hispanic, and White students increased proficiency percentages over time, with Black students going from 60% to 65% proficient, Hispanic students increasing their proficiency from 45% to 61%, and White students improving their proficiency from 60% to 82%. One exception is NVVA Black students in the 2012–2013 school year, when the percent proficient decreased by more than 30% from the previous year (from 60% to 27.6% proficiency). NVVA students with IEPs had the lowest proficiency percentages (approximately 25% proficient) and NVVA students who were eligible for FRL increased proficiency percentages over time, from 49% to 69%.

Dropout rate, graduation rate, and high school credit deficiency results were also provided. In the 2014–2015 school year, NVVA had a lower dropout rate for students in grade 9 (0.8%), a higher dropout rate for students in grades 10 and 11 (1.6% and 2.8%, respectively), and the same dropout rate for students in grade 12 (2.4%), when compared to the state. The dropout rate for NVVA students in grade 11 was more than 1% higher than their counterparts across the state. Graduation rates for NVVA female, male, Hispanic, and White students has steadily increased over the past four school years, ranging from 45% to 57% for female students, 30% to 56% for male students, 45% to 56% for Hispanic students, and 39% to 57% for white students. For NVVA black students, data was available only for the 2014–2015 school year, with the graduation rate at 45.5%. The graduation rate has decreased slightly for NVVA students who are eligible for FRL, from 38.5% to 35.1%. In terms of high school credit deficiency, NVVA students were most credit deficient in the 2011–2012 school year. In the 2014–2015 school year, 20–27% of students in grades 9, 10, and 12 were credit deficient while students in grade 11 were 40% credit deficient.

Recommendations

The work of improving teaching and learning for the lowest performing schools requires the collective will and energies of every individual within a school. Through our work with schools across the United States and abroad, McREL staff have learned the power of highly functioning PLCs. While strong leadership is an essential element of any school turnaround effort, McREL understands that most school leaders cannot effectively meet the demands of their jobs by working in isolation. Fostering *shared leadership* and creating a *purposeful community* among school staff promote a collective vision for the school that can be accomplished through collective action.

PLCs offer a structure within which staff at all levels of the school can be engaged in building purposeful community and shared leadership. PLCs provide a process for establishing a school-wide culture based

on a common vision of collaboration, collective inquiry, learning, and mutual trust. Further, PLCs that implement a process of continuous school improvement focus on results aligned with school goals.

Shared leadership creates conditions for maximizing individual and collective strengths and requires that others assume responsibility and take action for the good of the whole organization. McREL knows that school leadership demands more than one person can provide, and to that end offers this definition of shared leadership (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005):

“Shared leadership implies shared responsibility and mutual accountability toward a common goal or goals for the good of an organization. Shared leadership is not a program or a model. It is a condition that can be enabled and sustained through organizational authority.” (p. 71)

Purposeful community captures the idea that the staff in a school work together toward *shared* goals, targeting their resources—both tangible and intangible—to accomplish those goals. These goals can only be accomplished because the staff is acting as a whole. Purposeful community also incorporates the concept of collective efficacy, which, as explained earlier, refers to the perceptions of teachers that together they can make a positive difference with their students, regardless of mitigating factors (Goddard, 2001).

As schools foster shared leadership and purposeful community through highly functioning PLCs, collective efficacy begins to grow. Research provides evidence that collective efficacy has a stronger effect on student achievement than socioeconomic status (Hoy et al., 2002). This is good news for low-performing schools that have many students who live near and below the poverty line. Often, teachers in such schools believe that there is nothing they can do to overcome the effects of poverty and, consequently, they feel powerless to help their students. This can lead to lowered expectations for student achievement and fewer opportunities for students to learn the knowledge they need to meet challenging standards. Collective efficacy unleashes the potential in any school, which is why PLCs, purposeful community, and shared leadership serve as the cornerstones of McREL’s work to improve teaching and learning.

School improvement efforts should focus on school-level and teacher-level factors and leadership practices that influence student achievement (Marzano, 2000, 2003; Waters et al., 2003) and are built on the premise that PLC members increase their individual capacity for improving instruction through their work on the team. As they work with other teachers on grade-level or cross-grade-level teams, PLC members increase the capacity of other individual teachers and the staff as a whole to improve instruction. The increased school capacity and individual teacher capacity are mutually reinforcing and lead to the ultimate goal of improved student achievement.

McREL will work with NVVA to ensure that highly functioning PLCs are in place. In addition, NVVA staff will learn McREL’s continuous school improvement process, illustrated in Figure 38 (Cicchinelli et al.,

2009)—a process that is both systematic and systemic. Embedding McREL's five-step continuous school improvement process into the PLC structure in NVVA will promote responsibility and accountability across the school, enhance shared leadership, and provide a means for the PLC to accomplish its goals.

Figure 38. McREL's Continuous Improvement Process



McREL will support the continuous improvement process in NVVA through a combination of on-site visits and monthly virtual meetings with NVVA staff. Staff will be empowered to facilitate the process through the PLC structure, which will enable PLC members to implement and evaluate their collective actions as well as take corrective action, if needed. The following includes a detailed description of how McREL will conduct each step in the continuous school improvement process.

Stage 1: Take Stock. The first stage is to take stock of the school's current state. This is analogous with conducting a school-level diagnostic review to identify the needs of the NVVA. Taking stock entails the examination of all data sources to identify strengths and areas of concern. Then, areas of concern will be prioritized and improvement goals will be established. Through the process of identifying strengths, prioritizing needs, and establishing goals, NVVA staff better understand the role they play in school improvement, fostering shared leadership. Further, they will clearly establish a vision for success, promoting a purposeful community.

Currently, the NVVA leadership team has reviewed data and identified strengths and areas of concern, using results from the school diagnostic process. McREL will assist them in prioritizing areas of concern and establishing improvement goals. Some areas of concern that will be focused on are teacher ownership of the curriculum, better two-way communication between NVVA teachers and school leaders, and how to use student data to select appropriate instructional strategies.

Stage 2: Focus on the Right Solution. During this stage, McREL will support the NVVA School Improvement Leadership Team in the identification of research-based solutions that will help address the goals identified in Stage 1. Stage 2 is equivalent to structuring and facilitating a school turnaround performance planning process to identify robust improvement strategies to address areas of concern for the NVVA. Then, McREL and the NVVA school leadership team will co-develop an action plan to implement the selected solutions.

Strategies will include aspects of school leadership, turnaround conditions, Tier I instruction, PLCs, and social trust. Given that NVVA staff need to enhance their knowledge and skills in one or more of these areas, McREL will also support the NVVA staff by providing any necessary professional development,

coaching, and/or mentoring to the NVVA school leaders and staff. Table 24 provides McREL's recommendations for each of the school diagnostic requirements.

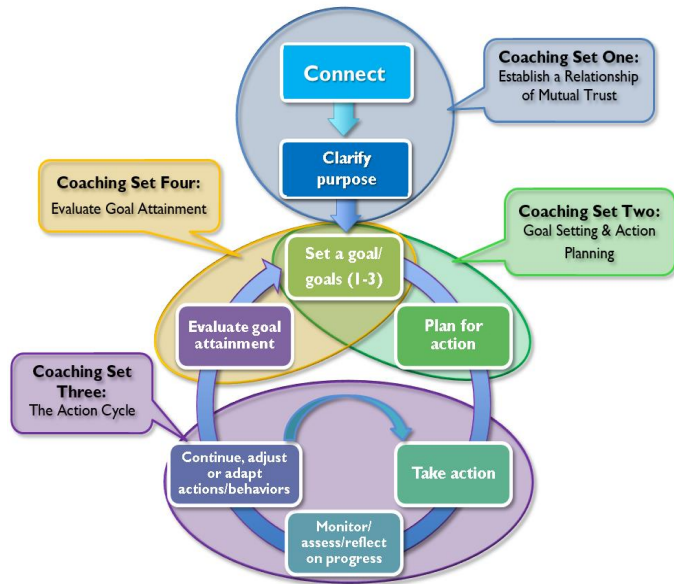
Table 24. McREL's Recommendations by School Diagnostic Requirements

School Diagnostic Requirement	McREL Recommendation
School Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus leadership practices on increasing student achievement by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Implementing the 21 responsibilities of Balanced Leadership (Waters & Cameron, 2007) ○ Implementing and managing change ○ Implementing systematic and systemic McREL's Continuous Improvement Process (Cicchinelli, Dean, Galvin, Goodwin, & Parsley, 2009) ○ Building trust between and among students, parents, staff, and administrators ○ Monitoring teacher performance and PLC effectiveness to give continuous feedback to improve
School Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deepen teachers' implementation level of the K¹² curriculum aligned to the Common Core State Standards through teacher professional development, PLC implementation, administrative implementation of the NEPF, and teacher self-assessment on the NEPF • Increase teachers' ownership of the K¹² curriculum • Develop teachers' understanding of and skills in aligning formative and summative assessments to the standards and expectations of the annual state assessment
Tier I Instruction aligned to State Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor effective instruction through administrative implementation of the NEPF and teacher self-assessment on the NEPF • Use data generated to provide individual coaching, PLC support, and continuous improvement short-cycle improvement strategies
PLC Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the PLC process in all subject areas with all teachers with quality, fidelity, intensity, and consistency • Increase effective use of data by PLCs to select strategies to increase student achievement • Increase effective use of data to select strategies to differentiate instruction based on student needs
School Climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build shared leadership, collective efficacy, and a purposeful community through effective continuous improvement led by the NVVA School Improvement Leadership Team
Teacher Effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve instruction of all teachers in the on-line environment to increase student achievement and address the achievement gaps, especially for special education students and students of color • Increase student engagement in the online environment through effective instruction • Improve implementation of the blended education model • Focus on increasing math achievement by improving instruction • Support implementation of the Next Generation Science Standards

Below are examples of the support that McREL will provide to implement the recommendations. These examples are not exhaustive of all of the support that McREL can offer to the NVVA; for example, McREL has developed a coaching approach that is specifically designed for supporting leadership roles in schools that may be used with the NVVA school leaders. The *Integrative Approach to Leadership Coaching* reflects a cyclical approach similar to the continuous improvement process (Figure 39) and is based on

four *coaching sets*, which include: 1) establishing a relationship of mutual trust, 2) goal setting and action planning, 3) the action cycle (an iterative support structure aligned with PDSAs), and 4) evaluation of goal attainment. These four coaching sets can be executed between the McREL coach and school leaders throughout the project to amplify the results of planning and implementation.

Figure 39. McREL’s Integrative Approach to Leadership Coaching



The core of the turnaround effort will be the work of the PLCs engaging in the data-informed decision making process to monitor and adjust instruction aligned to the needs of their students. Strong leadership and a supportive school climate assist the PLCs in staying focused on the task at hand: improving student achievement. Staying focused on teaching and learning is the key to any turnaround effort. Effective Tier I instruction lies at the center of effective PLCs.

Effective PLCs enhance Tier I instruction by building teachers’ instructional knowledge

and skills. More importantly, effective PLCs build a sense of collective efficacy that strengthens the fidelity of implementation. McREL will help build the capacity of the NVVA staff related to six characteristics that are the building blocks of an effective PLC (Hord & Tobia, 2012; Tobia & Hord, 2012), shown in Figure 40.

Figure 40. Six Characteristics of an Effective PLC



In addition, McREL’s suite of products, including *Classroom Instruction That Works (CITW)* and *Teaching Reading in the Content Areas (TRICA)*, offer research-based instructional strategies that will provide the NVVA with a starting point for identifying common, high-yield instructional strategies that could be used across the school in both the online environment and on-site, face-to-face classes. To address math achievement and the implementation of the Next Generation Science Standards, targeted professional development for math and science teachers will provide the knowledge, understanding, and research-based instructional strategies to raise student performance. Developing research-based, short-cycle improvement strategies to maximize the positive impact of a “blended-

education” model will provide a systematic and systemic implementation that includes monitoring and evaluating effectiveness.

McREL recognizes the importance of trust within a school. While trust alone is insufficient to ensure success, schools without trust have little chance of improving (Bryk & Scheider, 2002). McREL will provide professional development to the NVVA staff on the five facets of trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2004), depicted in Figure 41. McREL will also provide strategies on how to foster trust within the NVVA.

Figure 41. Five Facets of Trust

To reinforce the five facets, McREL will facilitate activities to demonstrate the importance of trust in school improvement and how the NVVA school leaders can help build it among staff. One strategy, for example, involves using vignettes to facilitate discussions about the facets of trust. Another strategy involves fostering trust by providing a means to connect on a personal level. Much of the work of effective schools and teams is predicated on relationships. Simply sharing personal information about upbringing, hobbies, and other such topics helps school staff connect with one another on a personal level and builds understanding and trust amongst and between NVVA teachers, school leaders, students, and parents.



Stage 3: Take Collective Action. After identifying strategies and developing a plan of action for school improvement efforts, the next step is implementation. To ensure proper implementation, McREL will provide the procedures needed to develop and maintain the structures and processes that allow PLCs to work collaboratively and productively to improve student learning. PLCs will learn how to support implementation by managing the change process and addressing various aspects of school culture, including high expectations for students and staff, productive mindsets, trust, and communication.

Stage 4: Monitor and Adjust. Stage 4 focuses on development of monitoring systems to collect data and benchmark the level of implementation and effectiveness of the strategies. In this stage, PLCs will be able to identify what is working and not working in order to stay focused on the right strategies and make necessary adjustments. PLCs will collect and analyze formative data to monitor implementation, effectiveness of strategies, and modify as needed. The PLCs will also use summative data to evaluate the effects of the strategies on student learning and progress towards goals established in Stage 1.

Monitoring will also include the continued administration of the surveys identified in Stage 1 (e.g., *Principals' Sense of Efficacy Scale*, *Collective Efficacy Short Form*, and *Omnibus T-Scale*) that will be used to adjust approaches with the NVVA staff. As in Stage 1, McREL will collect data from the surveys, analyze the data, and report on them. Monitoring implementation of the PLCs will include a document review of

PLC agendas and minutes. Further, monitoring the implementation of strategies will be dependent upon the specific strategies implemented. Figure 42 is a framework that can be used to provide a structure for planning how to gather and use data for progress monitoring. Data will be specific to the strategies.

Figure 42. Framework for Monitoring Implementation

FRAMEWORK FOR MONITORING IMPLEMENTATION					
STRATEGY:					
Monitor what?	What is the target?	What data will we use to monitor?	When will we monitor? (timeline)	Who will oversee the monitoring?	How will we decide what adjustments to make?
Spread of Implementation					
Fidelity of Implementation					
Effects of Implementation on Implementers					

Stage 5: Maintain Momentum. A key goal of McREL is to build NVVA’s capacity for continuous improvement. This will be accomplished by assisting PLCs as they establish structures and processes to build on their successes. In the *Maintain Momentum* stage, the PLCs reflect on and document what helped and hindered their success with improvement efforts. They then strategically use what they learned from prior efforts to support the success of subsequent improvement efforts. As PLCs become more proficient with the continuous school improvement process, the complexity and scope of the improvement initiatives will increase, as illustrated in Figure 43 (Cicchinelli et al., 2009).

Figure 43. Applying the Continuous School Improvement Cycle to Move from Efficacy to Sustainability



The approach of starting with manageable improvement initiatives will help PLCs experience “quick wins,” which increases their collective belief that by working together they can make a difference in student achievement. Over time, with repeated application of the continuous school improvement process, PLCs will increase their shared leadership, purposeful community, collective efficacy, and ability to take on larger and more complex initiatives with confidence.

collective efficacy, and ability to take on larger and more complex initiatives with confidence.

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Appendix A

Please indicate your opinion about each of the questions below by marking one of the nine responses in the columns on the right side. The scale of responses ranges from “None at all” (1) to “A great deal”

(9), with “Some Degree” (5) representing the mid-point between these low and high extremes. You may choose any of the nine possible responses, since each represents a degree on the continuum.

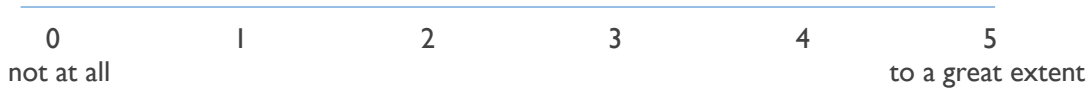
Please respond to each of the questions by considering the combination of your current ability, resources, and opportunity to do each of the following in your present position.

In your current role as principal, to what extent can you...	None at all 1	2	Very little 3	4	Some degree 5	6	Quite a bit 7	8	A great deal 9
Facilitate student learning in your school?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Generate enthusiasm for a shared vision for the school?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Handle the time demands of the job?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Manage change in your school?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promote school spirit among a large majority of the student population?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Create a positive learning environment in your school?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Raise student achievement on standardized tests?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promote a positive image of your school with the media?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Motivate teachers?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promote the prevailing values of the community in your school?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maintain control of your own daily schedule?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shape the operational policies and procedures that are necessary to manage your school?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Handle effectively the discipline of students in your school?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promote acceptable behavior among students?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Handle the paperwork required of the job?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promote ethical behavior among school personnel?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cope with the stress of the job?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prioritize among competing demands of the job?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

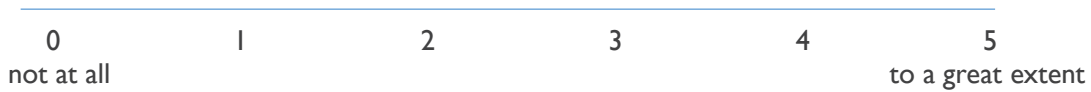
Appendix B

Please indicate how well you think your school's leadership team is functioning in terms of communication among team members and between the leadership team and the rest of the staff.

1. To what extent are the efforts of the leadership team coherent (e.g., there are logical connections among activities)?



2. To what extent is the work of the leadership team relevant and related to the school's improvement goals?



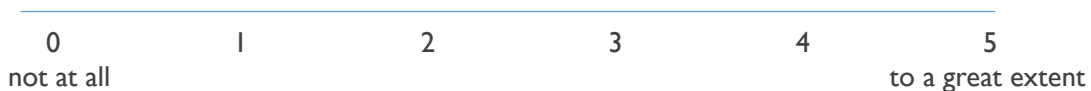
3. To what extent do all leadership team members contribute equally and truthfully to the work of the team?



4. To what extent are divergent points of view honored and encouraged on the leadership team?



5. To what extent are leadership team decisions communicated with the rest of the staff in a timely manner?



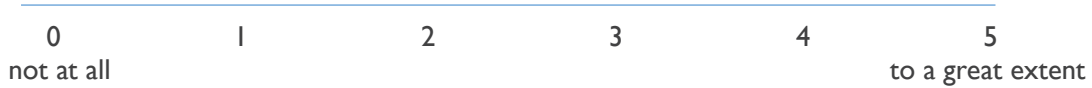
6. To what extent are the roles and responsibilities of leadership team members clearly defined?



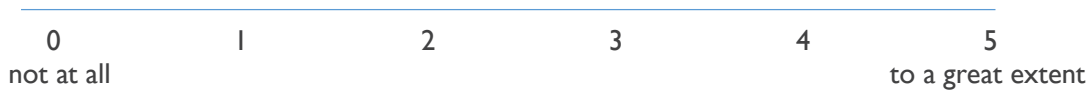
not at all

to a great extent

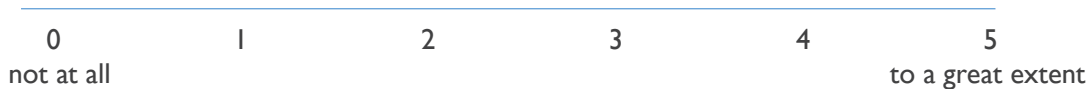
7. To what extent are the decisions the leadership team makes congruent with district and community desires?



8. To what extent is the staff supportive of leadership team decisions?



9. To what extent do individual members of the leadership team deliver the same message to their respective teams?



10. To what extent is the leadership team receptive to different points of view from the rest of the staff?



11. What do you believe is the purpose of the leadership team?

12. What evidence do you have that information from the leadership team is flowing to the rest of the staff?

13. Please identify some ways that the leadership team creates opportunities for staff members to build trust and take risks.

Appendix C

Efficacy for management

- Handle the time demands of the job
- Handle the paperwork required of the job
- Maintain control of your own daily schedule
- Prioritize among competing demands of the job
- Cope with the stress of the job
- Shape the operational policies and procedures that are necessary to manage your school

Efficacy for instructional leadership

- Motivate teachers
- Generate enthusiasm for a shared vision for the school
- Manage change in your school
- Create a positive learning environment in your school
- Facilitate student learning in your school
- Raise student achievement on standardized tests

Efficacy for moral leadership

- Promote acceptable behavior among students
- Promote school spirit among a large majority of the student population
- Handle effectively the discipline of students in your school
- Promote a positive image of your school with the media
- Promote the prevailing values of the community in your school
- Promote ethical behavior among school personnel

Appendix D

Good afternoon. My name is Shelby Maier. Thank you so much for taking the time to talk with me today. The purpose of the interview is to gather information on the Nevada Virtual Academy's infrastructure as it relates to the alignment of Common Core State Standards, the NV Virtual Academy curriculum, teacher instruction, assessment, and teacher professional development. The interview questions are specifically related to grades 9–12. Your input and perspective are critical to the gathering this information.

Before we get started, there are a few logistics that need to be completed. First, please read the consent form while I provide an overview of it. [Talk through main points of the consent form.] Are there any questions about the consent form? [If there are, answer them as best you can.] Second, I will be audio recording the interview to ensure that I capture your responses accurately when I analyze the data. The information gathered from the interview will be kept strictly confidential. Your name will not be used in any reports. Instead, comments will be summarized into themes. Audio files from the interview will be kept in a password-protected location on a secure server and destroyed after the end of the project. Are there any questions about recording the interview? [If there are, answer them.] Are you willing to be recorded? If yes, respond: Thank you. [If no, determine what could be done to allow the recording to take place or proceed with note taking only. Once this is taken care of, proceed with conducting the interview.]

Thank you. Let's get started.

Background Questions

First, I would like to talk with you about your role within the NV Virtual Academy and how long you've been at the Academy.

1. What is your current role within the NV Virtual Academy?
2. How long have you been at the NV Virtual Academy?
3. Prior to your current role within the NV Virtual Academy, what was your role?
 - a. [Follow up] Were you within the NV Virtual Academy? If not, what state and district were you in?

Alignment of School Infrastructure

Now, I would like to talk with you about the NV Virtual Academy's infrastructure as it relates to the alignment of the Common Core State Standards (since they were adopted by the NV Department of Education), the NV Virtual Academy curriculum, teacher instruction, student assessments, and teacher professional development.

1. Please describe your perceptions of the alignment of the Common Core State Standards, the NV Virtual Academy curriculum, teacher instruction, student assessments, and teacher professional development.
2. How were the Common Core State Standards incorporated into the NV Virtual Academy's curriculum?
 - a. [Follow up] What is the level of alignment between the curriculum and the CCCSS?

- b. [Follow up] How is alignment with the CCSS articulated within the curriculum?
3. What is the level of alignment between the NV Virtual Academy's curriculum and teacher instruction?
 - a. [Follow up] How does the Academy leadership ensure that teachers are using the curriculum in their instruction?
 - b. [Follow up] What support is provided to teachers to ensure their instruction is aligned with the curriculum?
 4. What is the level of alignment between the CCSS and assessments administered to NV Virtual Academy students?
 5. What is the level of alignment between NV Virtual Academy's curriculum and student assessments?
 6. What is the level of alignment between student assessment data and teacher professional development?
 - a. [Follow up] How is teacher professional development determined?

Policy Related to School Infrastructure

Now, I'd like to ask you questions about policies related to school infrastructure. These policies would complement the alignment of the Common Core State Standards, the NV Virtual Academy curriculum, teacher instruction, student assessments, and teacher professional development.

1. Does K¹² have policy related to the alignment of the Common Core State Standards, the NV Virtual Academy curriculum, teacher instruction, student assessments, and teacher professional development that the NV Virtual Academy adheres to?
 - a. [Follow up] If yes, what is the policy?
 - b. [Follow up] What guidance was provided by K¹² to Academy staff on the policy?
 - c. [Follow up] How does the Academy leadership ensure that that policy is followed?
2. Does the NV Virtual Academy have policy related to the alignment of the Common Core State Standards, the NV Virtual Academy curriculum, teacher instruction, student assessments, and teacher professional development?
 - a. [Follow up] If yes, what is the policy?
 - b. [Follow up] What guidance was provided by Academy leadership to Academy staff on the policy?
 - c. [Follow up] How does the Academy leadership ensure that that policy is followed?

Processes Related to School Infrastructure

Next, I'd like to ask you questions about processes related to school infrastructure. These processes would align and ensure that all educators are following specific protocols defined by the policy related to the alignment of the

Common Core State Standards, the NV Virtual Academy curriculum, teacher instruction, student assessments, and teacher professional development.

1. Does K¹² have processes related to the alignment of the Common Core State Standards, the NV Virtual Academy curriculum, teacher instruction, student assessments, and teacher professional development that the NV Virtual Academy adheres to?
 - a. [Follow up] If yes, what are the processes?
 - b. [Follow up] What guidance was provided by K¹² to Academy staff on the processes?
 - c. [Follow up] How does the Academy leadership ensure that that the processes are followed?

2. Does the NV Virtual Academy have processes related to the alignment of the Common Core State Standards, the NV Virtual Academy curriculum, teacher instruction, student assessments, and teacher professional development?
 - a. [Follow up] If yes, what are the processes?
 - b. [Follow up] What guidance was provided by Academy leadership to Academy staff on the processes?
 - c. [Follow up] How does the Academy leadership ensure that that the processes are followed?

Practices Related to School Infrastructure

Next, I'd like to ask you questions about practices related to school infrastructure. These practices are actions and activities related to the school infrastructure components that produce the best outcomes and alignment of the Common Core State Standards, the NV Virtual Academy curriculum, teacher instruction, student assessments, and teacher professional development.

1. Does K¹² have practices related to the alignment of the Common Core State Standards, the NV Virtual Academy curriculum, teacher instruction, student assessments, and teacher professional development that the NV Virtual Academy performs?
 - a. [Follow up] If yes, what are the practices?
 - b. [Follow up] What guidance was provided by K¹² to Academy staff on the practices?
 - c. [Follow up] How does the Academy leadership ensure that that the practices are followed?

2. Does the NV Virtual Academy have practices related to the alignment of the Common Core State Standards, the NV Virtual Academy curriculum, teacher instruction, student assessments, and teacher professional development?
 - a. [Follow up] If yes, what are the practices?
 - b. [Follow up] What guidance was provided by Academy leadership to Academy staff on the practices?
 - c. [Follow up] How does the Academy leadership ensure that that the practices s are followed?

3. From your perspective, what is the level of implementation of the school infrastructure across the NV Virtual Academy (i.e., not implemented at all, planning for implementation, partially implemented, or fully implemented)?
 - a. [Follow up] What evidence supports your perspective of the level of implementation?
4. What support was provided to NV Virtual Academy principals and teachers to implement the school infrastructure?
 - a. [Follow up] Was professional development provided? If yes, please describe what was provided. If no, why was professional development not provided?
 - b. [Follow up] What materials were provided to principals and teachers? If no materials were provided, why not?
 - c. [Follow up] Was ample time for professional development provided to implement the curriculum? If yes, please describe. If no, what time was needed?
 - d. [Follow up] What support do principals and teachers still need?

Closing Questions

These last few questions are about your general perspective of the NV Virtual Academy infrastructure.

1. Overall, what do you think is the greatest strength of the NV Virtual Academy infrastructure?
2. Overall, what do you think is the biggest challenge facing the NV Virtual Academy infrastructure?
3. What one change do you think would have the greatest positive impact to the NV Virtual Academy infrastructure moving forward?
4. What additional comments or feedback do you have about the NV Virtual Academy infrastructure?

Thank you so much for participating in this interview. If there is anything you would like to discuss or additional information you would like to provide, please don't hesitate to contact me. [Provide contact information to interviewee.]

Appendix E

Nevada Virtual Academy Teacher Self Audit

DOMAIN I: CLASSROOM STRATEGIES AND BEHAVIORS

Focuses Domain I focuses on classroom strategies and behaviors that impact student achievement. The 40 elements in Domain I are divided into three segments: (1) segments involving routine events (elements 1–5), (2) segments addressing content (elements 6–23), and (3) segments enacted on the spot (elements 24–40).

Domain I: Lesson Segments Involving Routine Events				
Design Question	What will I do to establish and communicate learning goals, track student progress, and celebrate success?			
Element 1	Providing clear learning goals and scales (rubrics)			
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using
Element 2	Tracking student progress			
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using
Element 3	Celebrating success			
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using

Domain I: Lesson Segments Addressing Content				
Design Question	What will I do to help students effectively interact with new knowledge?			
Element 6	Identifying critical information			
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using
Element 9	Chunking content into “digestible bites”			
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using
Element 11	Helping students elaborate on new information			
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using

Element 12	Helping students record and represent knowledge			
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using
Element 13	Helping students reflect on their learning			
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using
Element 15	Organizing students to practice and deepen knowledge			
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using
Element 19	Helping students practice skills, strategies, and processes			
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using
Element 20	Helping students revise knowledge			
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using
Design Question	What will I do to help students generate and test hypotheses about new knowledge?			
Element 21	Organizing students for cognitively complex tasks			
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using
Element 22	Engaging students in cognitively complex tasks involving hypothesis generation and testing			
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using
Element 23	Providing resources and guidance			
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using

DOMAIN 2: PLANNING AND PREPARING

Focuses Domain 2 focuses on planning and preparing, both of which are directly linked to classroom strategies and behaviors. Careful planning and preparation gives teachers time to incorporate effective classroom strategies and behaviors. The eight elements in Domain 2 are divided into three categories: (1) planning and preparing for lessons and units, (2) planning and preparing for use of materials and technology, and (3) planning and preparing for special needs of students.

Domain 2: Planning and Preparing for Lessons and Units				
Element 42		Planning and preparing for effective scaffolding of information within lessons		
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using
Element 43		Planning and preparing for lessons within a unit that progress toward a deep understanding and transfer of content		
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using
Element 44		Planning and preparing for appropriate attention to established content standards		
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using

DOMAIN 3: REFLECTING ON TEACHING

Focuses Domain 3 focuses on teacher self-reflection and the significant role they play in teacher development. The five elements in Domain 3 are divided into two categories: (1) evaluating personal performance and (2) developing and implementing a professional growth plan.

Domain 3: Evaluating Personal Performance				
Element 51		Evaluating the effectiveness of individual lessons and units		
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using
Element 52		Evaluating the effectiveness of specific pedagogical strategies and behaviors across different categories of students		
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using

DOMAIN 4: COLLEGIALITY AND PROFESSIONALISM

Focuses Domain 4 focuses on teacher collegiality and professional behavior. These behaviors are somewhat linked to classroom strategies and behaviors; however, they make up the foundational expertise from which the preceding three domains can grow. The six elements in Domain 4 are divided into three categories: (1) promoting a positive environment, (2) promoting exchange of ideas and strategies, and (3) promoting district and school development

Domain 4:	Promoting Exchange of Ideas and Strategies
Element 57	Seeking mentorship for areas of need or interest

Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using
Mentoring other teachers and sharing ideas and strategies				
Element 58				
Innovating	Applying	Developing	Beginning	Not Using

Appendix F

Good afternoon. My name is _____. Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in this focus group about professional learning communities, or PLCs, in the Nevada Virtual Academy. The purpose of the focus group is to gather your perception of PLC effectiveness in the Nevada Virtual Academy. Your input and perspective are critical to the gathering this information.

Before we get started, there are a few logistics that need to be completed. First, I provided you all with a consent form. Please read it while I provide an overview of it. [Talk through main points of the consent form.] Are there any questions about the consent form? [If there are, answer them as best you can.] Please sign your name at the bottom and give them to me. Second, we would like to audio record the focus group to ensure that we are capturing your responses accurately when we analyze the data. The information gathered from the focus group will be kept strictly confidential. Your name will not be used in any reports. Instead, comments will be summarized. We may directly quote what is said in a report, but we will not use the name of the person making the comment. Audio files from the focus group will be kept in a secure location and destroyed after the end of the school diagnostic. Are there any questions about recording the focus group? [If there are, answer them.] Are you willing to be recorded? If yes, respond: Thank you. [If no, determine what could be done to allow the recording to take place or proceed with note taking only. Once this is taken care of, proceed with conducting the focus group.]

Let's get started.

Background Questions

First, I would like to talk with you about your role within the NV Virtual Academy and how long you've been at the Academy.

1. What is your current role within the NV Virtual Academy?
2. How long have you been at the NV Virtual Academy?
3. Prior to your current role within the NV Virtual Academy, what was your role?
 - a. [Follow up] Were you within the NV Virtual Academy? If not, what state and district were you in?

General Perceptions of PLCs in the Nevada Virtual Academy

Next, I would like to ask you about your perceptions of PLCs in the Nevada Virtual Academy.

1. Please describe PLCs in the Nevada Virtual Academy.
2. When thinking about PLCs in the Nevada Virtual Academy, to what extent do you think they are effective?
 - a. [Follow up] In terms of promoting collective responsibility?
 - b. [Follow up] In terms of using data to determine student needs?
 - c. [Follow up] In terms of using data to evaluate results?

Policy related to PLCs

Now, I'd like to ask you questions about policies related to PLCs. These policies would complement the PLCs.

1. Does K¹² have policy related to PLCs that the NV Virtual Academy adheres to?
 - a. [Follow up] If yes, what is the policy?
 - b. [Follow up] What guidance was provided by K¹² to Academy staff on the policy?
2. Does the NV Virtual Academy have policy related to PLCs?
 - a. [Follow up] If yes, what is the policy?
 - b. [Follow up] What guidance was provided by Academy leadership to Academy staff on the policy?
 - c. [Follow up] How does the Academy leadership ensure that that policy is followed?

Practices related to PLCs

Next, I'd like to ask you questions about practices related to PLCs. These practices are actions and activities related to PLCs that produce the high levels of effectiveness.

1. Does the NV Virtual Academy have practices related to the implementation of PLCs?
 - a. [Follow up] If yes, what are the practices?
 - b. [Follow up] What guidance was provided by Academy leadership to Academy staff on the practices?
 - c. [Follow up] How does the Academy leadership ensure that that the practices s are followed?
2. Please describe how PLCs are implemented in the NV Virtual Academy.
 - a. [Follow up] Who attends the PLCs? Same grade level teachers? Cross grade level teachers?
 - b. [Follow up] How are they structured? Is there an agenda? Who creates it?
 - c. [Follow up] Are there roles and responsibilities assigned to participants?
3. What is the content of PLCs?
 - a. [Follow up] What is discussed?
 - b. [Follow up] To what extent are discussion topics aligned to school goals? Team goals? Individual goals?
 - c. [Follow up] Are data used during PLCs? If yes, how so and for what purpose?
4. What support was provided to NV Virtual Academy principals and teachers to implement PLCs?
 - a. [Follow up] Was professional development provided? If yes, please describe what was provided. If no, why was professional development not provided?
 - b. [Follow up] What materials were provided to principals and teachers? If no materials were provided, why not?

- c. [Follow up] Was ample time for professional development provided to implement the curriculum? If yes, please describe. If no, what time was needed?
- d. [Follow up] What support do principals and teachers still need?

Closing Questions

These last few questions are about your general perspective of PLCs in the NV Virtual Academy.

1. Overall, what do you think is the greatest strength of PLCs in the NV Virtual Academy?
2. Overall, what do you think is the biggest challenge facing PLCs in the NV Virtual Academy?
3. What one change do you think would have the greatest positive impact to the PLCs moving forward?
4. What additional comments or feedback do you have about PLCs in the NV Virtual Academy?

Thank you so much for participating in this focus group. If anything there is anything you would like to discuss or additional information you would like to provide to me, please don't hesitate to contact me. [Provide business cards to participants.]

Appendix G

Read each of the statements that follow and place mark in the column that indicates the extent (1, 2, 3, 4) to which YOU and TEACHERS IN YOUR SCHOOL engage in the practice described by the statement. The scale is from 1 to 4, with 1 indicating “to no extent” and 4 indicating “to a great extent.”

	Self-Assessment				Assessment of School				Optimal Response			
	To no extent		To a great extent		To no extent		To a great extent		To no extent		To a great extent	
	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
1. Teachers in this school are able to get through to difficult students.												
2. Teachers here are confident that they will be able to motivate their students.												
3. Teachers in this school really believe every child can learn.												
4. If a child doesn't want to learn, teachers here give up.												
5. Teachers here don't have the skills needed to produce meaningful student learning.												
6. These students come to school ready to learn.												
7. Home life provides so many advantages the students here are bound to learn.												
8. Students here just aren't motivated to learn.												
9. The opportunities in this community help ensure that these students will learn.												
10. Learning is more difficult at this school because students are worried about their safety.												
11. Drug and alcohol abuse in the community make learning difficult for students here.												
12. Teachers in this school do not have the skills to deal with student disciplinary problems.												

Appendix H

The following are statements about your school. Please indicate the extent to which you agree with each statement along a scale from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6).

	Strongly Disagree 1	2	3	4	5	Strongly Agree 6
1. Teachers in this school trust the principal.						
2. Teachers in this school trust each other.						
3. Teachers in this school trust their students.						
4. The teachers in this school are suspicious of most of the principal's actions.						
5. Teachers in this school typically look out for each other.						
6. Teachers in this school trust the parents.						
7. The teachers in this school have faith in the integrity of the principal.						
8. Teachers in this school are suspicious of each other.						
9. The principal of this school typically acts in the best interests of teachers.						
10. Students in this school care about each other.						
11. The principal of this school does not show concern for the teachers.						
12. Even in difficult situations, teachers in this school can depend on each other.						
13. Teachers in this school do their jobs well.						
14. Parents in this school are reliable in their commitments.						
15. Teachers in this school can rely on the principal.						
16. Teachers in this school have faith in the integrity of their colleagues.						
17. Students in this school can be counted on to do their work.						
18. The principal in this school is competent in doing his or her job.						
19. The teachers in this school are open with each other.						
20. Teachers can count on parental support.						
21. When teachers in this school tell you something, you can believe it.						
22. Teachers here believe students are competent learners.						
23. The principal doesn't tell teachers what is really going on.						
24. Teachers think that most of the parents do a good job.						
25. Teachers can believe what parents tell them.						
26. Students here are secretive.						

Appendix I

Your participation in this survey will help us make the Nevada Virtual Academy better! Your responses are completely anonymous. Therefore, please be as candid as possible. Thank you.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements about the school environment.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
The school has high standards for my student's academic achievement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The school is safe.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The school is a caring and nurturing place.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
As a parent/guardian, I feel welcome at the school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have opportunities for involvement at the school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The school looks and feels like a place where learning occurs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The school office is well run.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The school facilities are clean and well maintained.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overall, the school is a good place to learn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

ABOUT THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Please indicate the degree to which you agree with the following statements about the school's educational program.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	Not applicable
The school does a good job preparing my student for college.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The school does a good job of teaching my student basic skills (e.g., reading).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The school does a good job teaching my student "life skills" (e.g., responsibility).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The school tests are accurate measures of my student's academic performance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The school provides individualized instruction for my student.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My student's school work and homework assignments are meaningful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student discipline is fair.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My student has a close relationship with at least one adult at the school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overall, I am satisfied with my student's academic progress.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

ABOUT THE PRINCIPAL

Your feedback is an important part of an Aspire principal's annual performance evaluation.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	I don't know
The principal keeps the school focused on academic achievement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The principal is knowledgeable about teaching and learning methods.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The principal is well organized.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The principal has excellent communications skills.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The principal deals with problems and conflicts in a fair manner.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Overall, what grade would you give to the principal?

- No evidence
- Needs to develop
- Approaches standards
- Meets standards
- Exceeds standards

OVERALL

Overall, what grade would you give to the school?

- No evidence
- Needs to develop
- Approaches standards
- Meets standards
- Exceeds standards

Would you recommend this school to other families?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

Do you plan to re-enroll your child again next year?

- Yes
- No
- Undecided

If not, why will your child not attend this school next year?

- Child/family is moving away from the area
- I am not satisfied with the school
- Child does not want to return
- Other (please specify): _____

What do you most appreciate about the school that you would like to be sure continues?

What suggestions do you have for improvements at the school?

Thank you for completing the survey!

NEVADA STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

July 13, 2015

Nevada Department of Education
Conference Room
9890 South Meadows Parkway
Las Vegas, Nevada

And

Nevada Department of Education
700 East 5th Street
Room 2135
Carson City, Nevada

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

In Las Vegas:

Kathleen Conaboy
Robert McCord
Michael Van
Melissa Mackedon

In Carson City:

None

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Nora Luna
Elissa Wahl
Marc Abelman (left half way through meeting)

AUTHORITY STAFF PRESENT:

In Las Vegas:

Patrick Gavin, Director, State Public Charter School Authority
Joan Jurgensen, Education Program Professional, State Public Charter School Authority
Nya Berry, Education Programs Professional, State Public Charter School Authority
Traci House, Business Process Analyst, State Public Charter School Authority

In Carson City:

Jessica Hoban, Administrative Services Officer, State Public Charter School Authority
Angela Blair, Education Program Professional, State Public Charter School Authority
Kathy Robson, Education Program Professional, State Public Charter School Authority
Katie Higday, Management Analyst, State Public Charter School Authority
Danny Peltier, Administrative Assistant, State Public Charter School Authority

LEGAL STAFF PRESENT:

In Carson City:

Greg Ott, Deputy Attorney General

AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE:

In Las Vegas:

Attendance Sheet Attached

In Carson City:

Attendance Sheet Attached

CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL; PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE; APPROVAL OF AGENDA

President Conaboy called the meeting to order at 9:05am with attendance as reflected above.

Member McCord asked for a motion for a flexible agenda. Chair Conaboy agreed and called for a motion for a flexible agenda. Member Van motioned for flexible agenda, Member McCord seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 1 - Public Comment

Laura Feinman, representative of Charter Schools Development Corporation, spoke in support of the Founders Academy agenda item. She also wanted to inform the Authority that her organization was entering the Nevada market. Their mission is to assist charter schools with the acquisition of facilities. They have different programs to assist schools in development, purchasing and financing of charter facilities.

Chair Conaboy also said that Agenda Item 7 and 14 would be moved to the August board meeting

Agenda Item 5 - Overview and Update of SPCSA and NDE progress on submission of the 2015 Federal CSP

Director Gavin explained the process of submitting an application for the Federal CSP grant. Nevada had received the grant in the past, but had been passed over recently. He explained the CSP grant dollars would be used for startup costs for charter schools. He said the money could be used for training, professional development, and curriculum costs. The federal grant is not allowed to be used for facilities costs however.

Agenda Item 9 - Consideration of Mater Academy's interest in applying with Mater Florida for the federal charter school program replication and expansion grant

Director Gavin said there was an additional federal grant category that allowed individual charter schools to submit applications for access to this money. Collin Ringers, Sheila Moulton, Ricard, spoke on behalf of Mater Academy and Academica. They were requesting a letter of recommendation from the Authority to assist them in their application submission. Mr. Ringer explained the grant would be used for charter school management companies that serve low income students to expand their campuses to serve more of these types of students. Mater Florida would be the lead applicant but if the applicant was chosen, the money would be used at Mater Nevada too. Member McCord asked if this letter would only be in reference to Mater Academy in Nevada. Mr. Ringer agreed the letter would only be in reference to Nevada Mater Academy.

Member McCord moved for approval of a letter of support from the Authority. Member Mackedon seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 10 - Update on the progress of Equipo Academy for starting in the Fall of 2015

Members of Equipo Academy were not present at the meeting yet, so Chair Conaboy postponed their agenda item to later in the meeting.

Agenda Item 11 - Appoint SPCSA Board Member to preside over Nevada Virtual Academy Amendment request

Chair Conaboy disclosed that Nevada Virtual Academy is her client at McDonald Carano Wilson and therefore she would be recusing herself from the discussion.

Member Abelman motioned for Member McCord to serve as the chair for the Nevada Virtual amendment request. Member Van seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion carried unanimously

Chair Conaboy asked that Deputy Attorney General Ott clarify the Authority's quorum policy as there would only be 4 members voting on the proposed amendment. Mr. Ott said that since the Authority is a 7 member board and a majority of the members must be present to vote, 4 members would suffice for the amendment request hearing.

Agenda Item 12 - Nevada Virtual Academy amendment request pursuant to NAC 386.325

Don Curry, chair of NVVAA board; Karen Hendricks, counsel for NVVA, Caroline McIntosh, head of NVVA; and Danny Diamond, Principal of NVVA spoke on behalf of NVVA. Mr. Curry began by asking Mr. Diamond for an overview of past events at NVVA and why this amendment request was being submitted to the Authority.

Mr. Diamond said the school had been working very hard on their improvement since their renewal hearing with the Authority in 2013. He said they have worked to improve the orientation process for students, hired instructional coaches to help the teachers in an online environment, they put together a data driven instructional team to compile data to analyze and bring to life for the benefit of the teachers in the classroom. He said the proficiency rates at their high school has gone up in all of the necessary metrics, the graduation rate had almost doubled. All in all, he said the trends at NVVA were improving. Mr. Diamond explained that NVVA felt a blended instruction model would better serve the students at NVVA.

Ms. Hendricks said there were a series of amendments NVVA was requesting. They wished to change the enrollment cap to reflect numbers from the 2013-2014 school year as opposed to the 2014-2015 school year. She also spoke about the marketing concerns of NVVA that were brought up during the renewal hearing. She said the school wishes to market again in order to better serve students and reach out to students who may not know about NVVA otherwise. She said the school also had concerns in the recommendation letter from Director Gavin that would only limit NVVA enrollment of students to Clark County.

Member McCord asked members of the Authority for questions. Member Van asked about the face-to-face instruction at the facility that Mr. Diamond talked about. Ms. McIntosh said that was what NVVA was planning because they felt some students did better with more face-to-face instruction as opposed to only virtual education. Member Van asked how many students outside of Clark County attend NVVA. Ms. McIntosh said about seventy percent of students that attend NVVA live in Clark County with the other thirty percent made up from around the state.

Member McCord asked why the school had such a precipitous decline in attendance. Ms. McIntosh said the limitations that were placed on the marketing the school could engage in had hurt the schools attendance dramatically. She said the school wanted to follow the direction of the SPCSA, but felt it was a burden on a statewide virtual school. Member McCord asked if the school had tracked exiting students to see where they were attending after they school. Ms. McIntosh said many of the students leave the school at the end of the 8th grade year. She said most of the students that leave after 8th grade are their most proficient but they choose to attend brick and mortar high schools. Ms. McIntosh said the 2013-2014 data

showed that NVVA had the highest FRL population of any charter school. She found that some of the students were struggling being home alone and therefore, chose to go back to a regular school in order to have more contact with other pupils and teachers. Mr. Curry also added the NVVA board has been concerned about the same things the Authority had brought up. He said they requested that data be gathered to see why pupils were leaving the charter school. He said the thing that surprised them the most was that 8th grade students chose to go back to brick and mortar schools at a higher rate than any of the other students that attended the school. He said there was a myriad of reasons why these students chose to do that, from programmatic to social. Member McCord still found the decrease in enrollment, even in light of the 8th grade revelation was troubling and he suggested the school do more exit interviews with students leaving the school to better gauge why they felt virtual education was not working for them.

Member McCord referenced amendment request 3 and asked about the mutual covenant warranties. Ms. Hendricks said those were in reference to language that was included in the written charter agreement contract and was inserted in the amendment request to keep the language the same. Member McCord asked Mr. Ott about the NAC regarding the governance of virtual education in Nevada. Director Gavin asked that language going forward be in reference to the charter contract as the written agreement is no longer in use for NVVA.

Director Gavin submitted the recommendation report for the record:

Request 1: NVA's charter contract, executed in 2013, caps the school's enrollment at "the lessor of 4,446 pupils or the count day enrollment for SY2013-2014" (section 2.3.2). The school's actual count day enrollment in 2013-14 was 3,606. The school is seeking a charter amendment to formally establish that number as the contractual cap on enrollment for the 2014-15 school year.

Request 2: Section 2.3.4 of NVA's charter contract requires that the school seek a charter amendment for any variance in enrollment greater than 5 percent in subsequent years of the contract. The school's count day enrollment in 2014-15 was 2,662. The school is seeking a charter contract amendment to reflect this fact.

Request 3: NVA is seeking significant modifications to its academic program and operating model to facilitate the addition of several blended and dual enrollment options. NVA staff and board members will make a presentation and will be available to answer questions regarding this model.

Request 4: NVA is seeking authority to acquire one or more sites in Clark County for the purpose of bringing face-to-face instructional options closer to its student body. These facilities acquisitions would not permit the school to expand its student enrollment.

Background

Nevada Virtual Academy is a statewide distance education charter school which was chartered by the State Board of Education in 2007 and was renewed by the SPCSA board in 2013. The renewal was predicated on a high-stakes review of the school's academic, financial, and organizational performance by the SPCSA board in the fall of 2015. The school received a notice of concern for its academic performance in fall 2013 and received a notice of breach for its performance in fall 2015. Both NVA's elementary school and its high school are currently on the state's list of low-performing schools.

Recommendations:

Request 1: Approve

The school is seeking to clarify the actual count day enrollment in 2013-14 to ensure there is no ambiguity regarding the enrollment cap.

Request 2: Approve with Modification

The school had a variance of more than 5 percent of its approved enrollment. This is a material change necessitating a charter contract amendment. Following approval, the school's new contractual enrollment cap will be 2,662. Furthermore, SB511 of the 2015 legislative session has changed the state's pupil accounting model from a single count day to a quarterly average daily enrollment model. Consequently, the reference to count days in the contract should be modified to reflect this change in law. Staff recommends that the references to the fall count day be replaced with references to October 1 to ensure consistency with the new pupil accounting model. Based on the school's history of declining enrollment, staff further recommends that the language of the contract be modified to downwards-cap the enrollment in subsequent years, thereby clarifying that the October 1 enrollment count in 2015-16 will be the maximum approved enrollment of the school for the 2016-17 and that the October 1 count in each year will be the basis for the cap of the following year. Staff request authority to work with counsel to develop language consistent with this intent and to make technical adjustments as necessary to ensure consistency with current law. Staff further request delegated authority to furnish the approved amendment language to the school and execute the final contract modification on behalf of the Board.

Request 3: Approve with Modification

The school is to be applauded for its acknowledgement that significant changes are necessary to improve student academic performance. Staff recommends that the board approve the changes to the academic program, subject to several modifications:

Prohibit the school from operating instructional facilities outside of Clark County: NAC 386.340 provides that a charter school, including a school providing distance education, may not operate facilities for the purpose of instruction in more than one county. While the Authority has permitted virtual schools to operate offices in multiple jurisdictions and provide parent outreach, tutoring, test proctoring, and other federal and state-approved or mandated services face to face in multiple counties on an occasional basis, the provision of regularly scheduled instruction is prohibited under current law and regulation. Moreover, while SB509 does give the Authority board the power to create its own regulations regarding multi-county charters, those regulations have not yet been drafted, let alone approved, and the statute will not come into full effect until January 1, 2016. Consequently, the Board lacks the legal authority to permit the school to operate sites in more than one county for the purpose of instruction or to contract with a provider, including a college or university, to provide scheduled face-to-face instruction in more than one county.

Require Additional Clarification on the Criteria for Student Assignment to School Pathways: Staff wishes to ensure that there are clear, objective criteria, including test score data and a formal staff evaluation, to determine the program and pathway to which a student will be assigned by the school. Based on the school's past performance and the operating history of other virtual schools statewide, it is unclear that a parent/student opt-in model will yield stronger academic outcomes than the school's present academic program. Moreover, the criteria must also make it clear that the student's individual needs—not the convenience to the school or the family—is the sole driver placement decisions. Put simply, the most robust, site-based academic model must be the default option for all newly enrolled

students in order for the school to be able to ensure that it is making academic placement decisions based on academic need versus operational concerns.

Prohibit the Enrollment of New Students from Outside of Clark County: *As noted above, the SPCSA lacks the legal authority to permit a school to operate instructional facilities in more than one county. The school is proposing an unprecedented shift in academic and operating model which, combined with current statutory and regulatory provisions, will create a two-tier model. Students residing in Clark County will benefit from a far more robust academic model with a broad range of pathways and delivery systems, while students who live outside the county will have only one option, a legacy academic program which the school understands is not the model best suited to meet the academic needs of much of its current student body. Consequently, staff recommends that the school be prohibited from enrolling any new students residing outside of Clark County.*

Robust Analysis of the Effectiveness of Pathways and Delivery Systems: *Staff recommends that the SPCSA Board require the school to contract with a reputable third party evaluator, approved by the SPCSA, for the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of these different pathways.*

Affirm the Board's Commitment to the High Stakes Review: *None of the proposed Amendments seek to eliminate or delay the upcoming high stakes review. However, notwithstanding its recommendation of approval of the previously discussed items, staff recommends that the SPCSA Board emphasize that the high stakes review will occur during the 2015-16 school year. Staff also recommend that the Board delegate to staff the authority to modify the language around the high stakes review to permit the Board, at its discretion, to postpone the high stakes review until the winter of 2016 in the event that counsel or staff recommend that any decision regarding the future of the school be deferred to permit evaluation of the potential impacts of recent or impending statutory or regulatory changes.*

Align the Charter Contract and Performance Framework: *Additionally, staff recommends that the charter contract and the school's performance framework be amended to specifically include the criteria set for in SB509 and other bills defining a low-performing charter or traditional public school and clarifying that a school can be placed into breach of contract or served with notice of closure based on persistent underperformance—including but not limited to performance which precedes the effective date of the charter contract.*

Request 4: Approve

The most recent revisions to NAC specifically permit a sponsor to deny a request to occupy a new facility if the school is not rated three star or above. Nevada Virtual Academy's elementary and high schools are both rated at the 2 star level. However, the regulations were crafted to grant a sponsor significant discretion in such cases. It is important to note that this additional facility is not intended to serve new students. Rather, the school's stated intent is to ensure that there are multiple, easily accessible facilities in Clark County to meet the needs of its current students—a geographically dispersed student body. The switch from a fully virtual to a blended model will be a significant disruption to students and families. Consequently, the addition of new facilities for the purpose of better serving its current approved enrollment is an appropriate and sensitive means of accommodating a broader cross-section of the school's student body.

The Authority and representatives then discussed the regulations governing charter schools with regard to operating in more than one county. Currently, a school which offers solely virtual education can operate in more than one county, however if a school is using a blended model, it can't offer services to students in more than one county. Member McCord hoped that the Legislative Counsel Bureau would be

able to expedite the codifying of the NAC that had been passed before the legislation session and the laws that were passed during the 2015 session.

Counsel for NVVA asked for a recess for their agenda item regarding the operation of more than one county so she could consult with leadership at NVVA. Member McCord said that would not be a problem.

Upon the completion of the recess, the school requested an adjusted enrollment request that would be the equivalent to 20 percent increase over the 2013-2014 enrollment numbers. They also asked to be able to increase their marketing to allow students better access to their program. NVVA also asked to amend their amendment request to allow for the approval of the blended model for Clark County only in order to try the new model, but still allow students to attend NVVA virtually in other part of the state.

Member Van moved for approval of NVVA's amendment request with the 10 percent growth rate each year with the allowance of some marketing, approval of the blended model for Clark County and online model for the rest of the state, and a review of the program in January by the Authority to determine the program's success. Member Abelman seconded. Discussion continued

Director Gavin felt this would be a good compromise between the Authority and NVVA. He said both groups were able to find common ground which should be rewarded. Member McCord said while the Authority's concerns with the school will remain, he is very encouraged with the progress NVVA made and hoped it would continue on its path of success. Member Van also appreciated the compromise the Authority and NVVA made.

Upon completion of discussion of the motion the Authority voted 4 – 0 for approval of NVVA's amendment request with the 10 percent growth rate each year with the allowance of some marketing, approval of the blended model for Clark County and online model for the rest of the state, and a review of the program in January by the Authority to determine the program's success. Chair Conaboy abstained, Member Wahl and Member Luna were absent.

Agenda Item 10 - Update on the progress of Equipo Academy for starting in the Fall of 2015

Ben Salkowe, founding Principal of Equipo Academy, spoke on behalf of Equipo Academy. Mr. Salkowe spoke about the teacher recruitment, enrollment projections, facility development, fundraising outcomes and program designs. He said that as of the morning of the meeting they had enrolled 97% of their projected enrollment goals. He said they had interviews with the potential students in order for the students to have the opportunity to fully understand the program they were enrolling in. Mr. Salkowe said the school also underwent an intensive hiring process to identify and hire teachers who they felt would buy-in to the mission of Equipo Academy. He said the school was very pleased with the results and was looking forward to seeing the new teachers in the classroom. Mr. Salkowe then explained the process of picking out and designing the facility the school would use. He said they did not pick the first available property; instead they spent time trying to find the building that would fit the needs for the students that would attend the school. He said the building was on track to be completed by the August 10 deadline. He said fundraising has also been going very well and donors weren't just writing a check, instead they were becoming involved with the school and the buildup to the first day. He said the curriculum planning has been coming together as well. He said they were planning their training sessions so the new teachers would be best equipped for the first day of school. Mr. Salkowe finished his presentation by discussing the empowerment his team had felt during this process. Mr. Salkowe said he hoped that the SPCSA staff would design and implement training for charter schools that better fit the schedules of the educators that

work at the school. He said he hoped the staff might offer trainings and meetings later in the evening or on Saturdays.

Member McCord said the outline Mr. Salkowe had just given for the startup of Equipo Academy should be used as a model for all developing charter schools in Nevada. The careful thought put into the various details, from school architecture, teacher identification and hiring, to curriculum planning as all been done with a goal in mind and that sets in place the groundwork for a very successful charter school.

Agenda Item 13 - Beacon Academy amendment request pursuant to NAC 386.325

Tambre Tondryk, Principal; Elizabeth Dixon, Vice Principal; Ms. Sanchez, attorney and Travis Cherry, technology coordinator spoke on behalf of Beacon Academy regarding their amendment request. Ms. Tondryk said she hoped the Authority would approve their three request to change the proposed plan of study, enrollment and facilities. She said during the renewal process, Beacon had been identified as low performing and struggled to obtain their charter contract. She said this request would allow Beacon to better serve the students at Beacon Academy and allow for the school to increase it state mandated star rating. She said the school had start meeting with students prior to them beginning at Beacon in order to identify why the students were choosing Beacon over other educational options. She said that some of the students were choosing online education because they felt it was easier and they wouldn't have t attend very much. She said the school's goal was to guide identify these type of students and better help them as they work their way through Beacon.

Chair Conaboy asked how the program has been introduced to parents and students. Ms. Tondryk said the news has been received very well by parents and students alike. She said the parents felt this would better help their children complete their education at Beacon more successfully. The students felt it would be better for them as they only have four teachers instead of the seven they had been interacting with before. Ms. Tondryk said that national research about online education is showing that smaller class schedules and fewer teachers per semester better allowed the children to work their way through the coursework without getting lost between subjects and teachers. In short, instead of seven classes for two semesters, the schedules allows for four classes over four quarters.

Member Mackedon said she appreciated the school's willing to take a new approach to their model and the students they serve. Member McCord said the data the school provided was not the best data they could have provided. He said the data included in the school's packet was dated and mostly spoke to higher education. He did say however, there was data supporting the requests the school was making, but the school did not capture that data for its presentation. He advised the school look into the newer data to see if it gave more insight and better recommendations to even better strengthen the school's proposed model.

Chair Conaboy asked for a motion to approve Request three in Beacon Academy request for amendment pursuant to NAC 386.325.

Request 3: Approve Contingent Upon NDE Approval and School Acceptance of Additional Recommendations 1 & 2 and Modification Outlined Above Under Request 2

Staff is forwarding this request as it was submitted simultaneously with the previous requests and it provides context on some changes the school is making with the stated intent of improving pupil outcomes. The school is to be applauded for its acknowledgement that significant changes are necessary to improve student academic performance and for being willing to experiment with strategies which may allow some students to be more academically successful. Staff recommends that the board approve the changes to the schedule contingent upon the NDE approval for an alternate schedule mandated by NAC.

Member Mackedon moved for approval of Item three of Beacon Academy's amendment request pursuant to NAC 386.325. Member Van seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Sanchez spoke about the changes in count day that had been passed at the previous legislative session. She said this may have an impact on the enrollment numbers at Beacon Academy thus affecting the 10% increase/reduction provision included in their charter contract. Beacon Academy was asking for an enrollment increase of about 18%. She said Beacon wants to be maxed out at 630 pupils after the increase in the star rating in the previous year.

Discussion then continued between the Authority, Director Gavin and the representatives of Beacon Academy regarding the language in bills that may have effect on enrollment. Due to some of the changes made during the 2015 Legislative session, Director Gavin included new requirements that would need to be agreed to in order for the amendment to be approved.

Director Gavin outlined the recommendations for each of the remaining amendment request of Beacon Academy. The recommendations are included below:

Request 1: Approve Contingent Upon School Acceptance of Additional Recommendation 1 and Modification Outlined Below Under Request 2

The school is seeking to clarify the actual count day enrollment in 2013-14 to ensure there is no ambiguity regarding the enrollment cap.

Request 2: Deny and Modify Contract to Conform to Statute and Clarify Intent

Consistent with previous board action, staff recommends that the Board deny this request. Enrollment increases must be earned based on academic, financial, and organizational performance. Beacon has historically been one the lowest performing schools in the state. While the school made some academic improvement last year, one data point does not constitute a trend. Staff recommends multiple years of sustained improvement before the school is permitted to expand. SB511 of the 2015 legislative session has changed the state's pupil accounting model from a single count day to a quarterly average daily enrollment model. To ensure consistency with the new statute and with the board's stated desire to reserve enrollment expansion for schools with strong and consistent academic performance, staff recommends that the enrollment calculation in the contract be based on the October 1 enrollment to ensure consistency with the new pupil accounting model and provide more clarity to the school. Based on the school's declining enrollment, staff further recommends that the language of the contract be modified to downwards-cap the enrollment in subsequent years, thereby clarifying that the October 1 enrollment count in 2015-16 will be the maximum approved enrollment of the school for the 2016-17 and that the October 1 count in each year will be the basis for the cap of the following year. Staff request authority to work with counsel to develop language consistent with this intent and to make technical adjustments as necessary to ensure consistency with current law. Staff further request delegated authority to furnish the approved amendment language to the school and execute the final contract modification on behalf of the Board.

Additional Recommendation 1: Affirm the Board's Commitment to the High Stakes Review: *None of the proposed amendments seek to eliminate or delay the upcoming high stakes review. However, notwithstanding its recommendation of approval of several of the previously discussed items, staff recommends that the SPCSA Board emphasize that the high stakes review will occur during the 2015-16 school year. Staff also recommend that the Board delegate to staff the authority to modify the language around the high stakes review to permit the Board, at its discretion, to postpone the high stakes review*

until the winter of 2016 in the event that counsel or staff recommend that any decision regarding the future of the school be deferred to permit evaluation of the potential impacts of recent or impending statutory or regulatory changes.

Additional Recommendation 2: Align the Charter Contract and Performance Framework: Additionally, staff recommends that the charter contract and the school's performance framework be amended to specifically include the criteria set for in SB509 and other bills defining a low-performing charter or traditional public school and clarifying that a school can be placed into breach of contract or served with notice of closure based on persistent underperformance—including but not limited to performance which precedes the effective date of the charter contract.

Member Van moved for approval of staff recommendation of items 1 and 2 of Beacon Academy's amendment request. Member Mackedon seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 18 - Consideration of Willie H. Brooks Soar Academy request for an extension of Subsection 7 per NAC 386.240(1)

Member McCord asked that Agenda Item 18 be moved to the August board meeting schedule.

Member McCord moved for a final postponement of Agenda Item 18. Member Van seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 15 - Founders Academy amendment request pursuant to NAC 386.325

Bob Beers, treasurer; Rich Moreno, Board President; Mark Hessiak, Vice President; Carol Leavitt, principal; Sylvia Garcia, Board member; Brenda Flank, board member, spoke on behalf of the school.

Member Van disclosed that he had represented Ms. Leavitt's children in a court case. Member Abelman disclosed he knew Mr. Beers through various downtown endeavors. All members said the relationship would not have an impact on the hearing. Member McCord also said he knew Ms. Leavitt through the Clark County School District, but that it too would not have an effect on the hearing.

The recommendation report to which the Founders representatives spoke to follows:

Background

Founders was approved by the SPCSA board in 2013 and opened in the fall of 2014. The Las Vegas school commenced operation in 2014 and just concluded its first year of operation. The school has not received any notices of concern or breach related to its academic, financial, or organizational performance to date , although data to prompt such sanctions has been limited until recently.

In reviewing the school's submissions to the Authority in their entirety and speaking with members of the governing body and school employees, staff has identified a number of oversights which are cause for concern, including:

- *The school has made incorrect cash flow assumptions and has overestimated revenues and underestimated expenses, resulting in the need to resort to multiple short term loans at varying interest rates*
- *Separation of duties between board members and school administration are unclear, leaving questions related to accountability and proper governance*
- *The school lacks the tools to demonstrate that it is academically successful*

Recommendations: Approve with Conditions

The most recent revisions to NAC specifically permit a sponsor to deny a request to occupy a new facility if the school is not rated three star or above. The school has no academic track record. However, the regulations were crafted to grant a sponsor significant discretion in such cases.

Based on a review of the school's submissions to date, it is clear that entering into this new lease will permit the school to significantly reduce its operating expenses and it will also permit a modest increase in revenue by permitting it to accommodate its rising 11th grade class. Those two changes are projected to significantly improve the school's cash position and its overall financial viability. However, it appears that many of the issues which have arisen this year were predictable, prompting staff to recommend that the approval be contingent upon the following sanctions and corrective actions:

Sanctions: *Staff has determined that the school should be subject to a Notice of Concern, based on inconsistencies in the, scheduled to be completed in the Fall of 2015. The school will be required to adopt an Authority-approved fiscal improvement plan to increase its available cash position on a quarterly and annual basis and will be required to adopt and adhere to a budget where revenues exceed expenses on a quarterly and annual basis. The school will be required to achieve quarterly and annual targets for the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years. Failure to comply with the terms of the fiscal improvement plan and achieve quarterly or annual objectives as measured by both quarterly financial reports and the annual independent audit will result in a Notice of Breach. In the event that the school is served with a Notice of Breach, the school will be required to adopt an authority-approved fiscal improvement plan to increase its available cash position on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis and will be required to adopt and adhere to a budget where revenues exceed expenses on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis. Failure to comply with the terms of the fiscal improvement plan and achieve monthly, quarterly, or annual objectives during either the 2015-16 or 2016-17 school year as measured by monthly and quarterly financial reports and the annual independent audit will result in a Notice of Closure.*

Additionally, staff recommends that the school develop a comprehensive corrective action plan, subject to SPCSA staff review and approval, which should include, but not be limited to the following:

Hire a Qualified Director of Operations: *Staff recommends that the SPCSA Board require the school to recruit and hire an experienced, full-time Director of Operations to manage the day-to-day relationship of the school in association with its financial management provider.*

Evaluate Board Make-Up and Recruit Additional Board Members, Including At Least One Additional Member with Extensive Financial Management Experience: *Staff recommends that the SPCSA Board require the school to evaluate whether each member of the current governing board is sufficiently objective and has the capacity to appropriately govern the school. The governing board should be required to expand to add at least three additional board members, including one additional member with extensive financial management experience. Authority staff also recommend the governing board to provide a plan which is acceptable to staff regarding how the board will mitigate any potential deleterious effects of having relatives, close friends, and associates sitting concurrently on the governing board.*

Establish a Strong Finance Committee: *Staff recommends that the SPCSA Board require the school to establish a strong Finance Committee of at least three members which will meet on a monthly basis (at minimum).*

Board Training: *Staff recommends that the SPCSA Board require the school to participate in Board on Track (f/k/a The High Bar) for online board training and evaluation resources.*

Establish a Robust Internal Assessment System: *It is unclear how the school measures progress towards the goals set forth in its charter and how the limited assessment tools currently employed by the school align to the Nevada Academic Content Standards. As a result, the school has been unable to provide credible, objectively verifiable data to justify its request to occupy additional space and to demonstrate that it is indeed making the academic progress which it believes it is achieving. Staff recommends that the SPCSA board mandate that the school adopt such an assessment system, subject to Authority staff approval, as a condition of approval of this amendment and that data from those assessments be furnished to support any subsequent amendment requests.*

Align the Charter Contract and Performance Framework: *Additionally, staff recommends that the charter contract and the school's performance framework be amended to specifically include the criteria set forth in SB509 and other bills defining a low-performing charter or traditional public school and clarifying that a school can be placed into breach of contract or served with notice of closure based on persistent underperformance.*

Mr. Beers began by stating their group disagreed with the recommendations of the SPCSA staff. Their request is below:

As noted in its Charter Agreement and Application, Founders will add the eleventh grade in the upcoming school year, and the proposed additional facilities will both provide space for the eleventh grade as well as space for additional students in the existing grades. With the proposed additional facility, Founders is currently expecting a total enrollment of 530 students, an increase of 97 students from the 2014 - 15 academic year. Founders' current facilities will not accommodate this amount of students.

The addition of eleventh grade will help Founders fulfill its initial mission of providing a complete, integrated curriculum from K-12 instruction. Further, the additional 97 students which will attend Founders this year will provide approximately \$582,000 in additional revenue, which is essential to balancing Founders' budget. These facilities will also allow for the addition of the twelfth grade in the 2016 - 17 school year without acquiring any new space at that time. Finally, the acquisition of a gymnasium/multi-purpose space (the 4145 Building) will give Founders the flexibility to greatly expand its physical education programs and extra-curricular offerings. Founders' first year has been a great success despite the many challenges which the school had to overcome. Founders ask that the Authority approve its request to occupy additional facilities so that it may continue to work towards its ultimate goal of establishing a charter school that provides unparalleled, tuition-free education to the children of Nevada. Multiple members of Founders Governing Board and a representative of the new owner of the facilities will be present at the Authority's July 13, 2015 meeting to answer any questions the Authority may have.

Mr. Beers said their board disagreed with each of the four points made in the recommendation report. Ms. Leavitt then spoke about her time as the principal of Founders Academy. She said she had been impressed by the work ethic of the students and the results for students the school was producing. Ms. Leavitt said the lack of data was due to the school being in its first year. She said she had taken issue with some of the language used by SPCSA staff in the recommendation report. Ms. Leavitt felt that the reading, spelling and math were very successful at the elementary school level.

Mr. Beers said the claim there were improper separation of duties at the school and he said it would be hoped the Authority would be able to ask them questions directly since they had not been asked up until the point of the recommendation report. Member Conaboy asked about the Organizational chart because

she saw a lot shared duties and unclear supervisory structure. Mr. Beers said that due to the small scale of the staff there were shared duties during the first year. He said there would be a new principal next year as Ms. Leavitt would be retiring. He is intent on creating a more structured organizational chart. Mr. Beers then discussed the business makeup of the school and how it dealt with finances, payroll and office management. Member McCord asked if Mr. Beers had oversight over these areas as he was the board treasurer. Mr. Beers confirmed that he does oversee these areas of the school.

Mr. Beers then addressed the concern brought up in the SPCSA staff recommendation report that noted numerous loans that had been taken out by Founders Academy. He said that due to problems with NDE's DSA payment release they were forced to take out loans in order to meet their basic operating costs. He said the school had addressed some of these concerns by eliminating some expenses out of the budget for the upcoming school year.

Member Mackedon asked Mr. Beers to lay out each of the loans the school had taken and when those loans were taken out. Mr. Beers said they took two loans during the beginning of their operation, with one being substantially paid back and the other scheduled to begin payback during the upcoming school year. He said they took out an additional loan, but did not have the specific dates when that loan was executed. He said they believe in prudent cash management and don't take out more cash than they need on hand. He said there were three short term loans, one which had been paid back fully and the other two scheduled to be paid back over the course of the next year. Member Mackedon asked for clarification as to why the school had needed so many loans. Mr. Beers said the short term loans were used for various day-to-day operations.

Chair Conaboy asked Mr. Beers why Founders had fallen short with regard to their budgeting. Mr. Beers said they wanted to pay back one of the loans with a different loan because they wanted to have the better interest rate instead. Mr. Beers also added that they had anticipated having more donations from the community that had not come through. Mr. Beers also said that being a brick and mortar school had added to some of the costs that they did not anticipate while completing the charter application.

Discussion then began regarding Founders Education Legacy and if this was considered an EMO. Mr. Moreno said that when a school opened they were not allowed to be a 501c3. He said that was the reason they began the Founders Education Legacy (FEL) so that they could receive donations on behalf of the school. Mr. Moreno also discussed the people who were retired and receiving PERS would not be able to receive money from another government agency. They must receive their payments from an entity that pays Social Security instead of PERS. Mr. Moreno explained the payment structure of FEL and Founders Academy, the school. Member Mackedon said after hearing the description of FEL, it sounded like FEL was made into an Education Management Organization, which would have needed to be approved by the Authority. Mr. Beers said the school was willing to work with staff at the Authority to bring FEL into compliance.

Chair Conaboy asked if Mr. Moreno would be transitioning to a governing role and allow the school's administrators to run the day-to-day operations. Mr. Beers said that was anticipated, but did not have the exact timeline.

Chair Conaboy moved to the proposed lease for the facility Founders was moving to. Ms. Feiman of Founders explained the rent structure of their lease agreement and why they were in need of another campus. They also discussed how the arrangement between the property firm and the school would work. Chair Conaboy said that some of the arrangements in the lease were troubling for her. She said the school looked to have a disproportionate amount of liability that typically would be paid for by the land lord.

Member Mackedon said she was concerned with the school taking on this lease payment since they already demonstrated difficulties with their current budget. Mr. Beers said this had all been built into the budget and the school was prepared to take on the lease payment. Chair Conaboy did say she was concerned with some of the language in the proposed lease, but she would support the motion.

Member McCord moved for approval of Founder Academy's amendment request pursuant to NAC 386.325. Member Van seconded. The motion carried unanimously

Upon completion of the vote, Tim Peterson, spoke to the Authority regarding charter schools in Texas and Arkansas and his plans as the new principal of Founders Academy.

Agenda Item 3 – Authority Update

Chair Conaboy asked members who attended the National Charter School Alliance meeting to recap their trip. Member Abelman said he found the governance portion of the conference to be very enlightening. He hoped the Authority board would keep this as a priority for schools in the future. Member Mackedon said she left the conference feeling motivated again. She said the speakers the conference had did a great job and invigorating her to come back and start the school year.

Member Abelman left

Agenda Item 17 - Doral Academy amendment request pursuant to NAC 386.325

Representatives of Doral were seeking approval from the Authority to expand their campus. They felt they could better serve their student population by expanding their campus and allow for K-12 education. Director Gavin submitted the recommendation report:

Background

Doral was approved by the SPCSA Board in 2013 and opened in the fall of 2013. It currently operates under a charter contract. It has previously received approval to operate two additional elementary-middle school facilities and to add a high school program. The school has not received any notices of concern or breach related to its academic, financial, or organizational performance. The school currently operates a 5 star elementary school program and a 3 star middle school program. Results from internal assessments indicate that the school is continuing to make academic growth, but it is important to note that absent SBAC data it is impossible to determine what, if any, predictive value the school's commercially available testing system has related to SBAC performance. As the school only operated one campus at the time of the most recent CRT administration, it is not possible to disaggregate academic performance on high stakes state assessments by campus.

Recommendation: Approve with Conditions

The school meets the current criteria for approval for a new facility pursuant to the most recent revisions to NAC. As the school is submitting this request well in advance of executing on a lease or sale, staff requests that the initial approval be granted as a strategic amendment to acquire and operate a facility in the approximate identified area and serving the grade levels and student enrollment identified in the request. Staff further requests delegated authority to grant additional technical amendments and approvals in upon receipt of documentation and other items required under NAC to occupy the building. This approval is consistent with the mechanism the Authority Board uses to permit the incorporation of pre-opening requirements for new schools into the charter contract without the delay and complexity attendant to additional board review.

The representatives of Doral said the word of mouth about their school was growing and the additional interest would require more space. They said they had a 5 star rating and hoped to continue that for more students with the additional campuses.

Member McCord moved for approval of Doral Academy's amendment request pursuant to NAC 386.325. Member Mackedon seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 16 - Pinecrest Academy amendment request pursuant to NAC 386.325

Carrie Buck spoke on behalf of Pinecrest Academy. The school was requesting an additional facility for K-12 education. The school is rated as 4 stars for middle schools and 3 stars for elementary. Dr. Buck said that while she has been at the school she has focused a lot of energy to bring the math scores back up to an acceptable level.

Director Gavin submitted the recommendation report for the record:

Background

Pinecrest was approved by the SPCSA Board in 2012 and opened in the fall of 2013. It currently operates under a written charter. It has previously received approval to operate two additional elementary-middle school facilities and to add a high school program. The school has not received any notices of concern or breach related to its academic, financial, or organizational performance. The school currently operates a 3 star elementary school program and a 4 star middle school program. Results from internal assessments indicate that the school is continuing to make academic growth, but it is important to note that absent SBAC data it is impossible to determine what, if any, predictive value the school's commercially available testing system has related to SBAC performance. As the school only operated one campus at the time of the most recent CRT administration, it is not possible to disaggregate academic performance on high stakes state assessments by campus.

Recommendations: Approve with Conditions

The school meets the current criteria for approval for a new facility pursuant to the most recent revisions to NAC. As the school is submitting this request well in advance of executing on a lease or sale, staff requests that the initial approval be granted as a strategic amendment to acquire and operate a facility in the approximate identified area and serving the grade levels and student enrollment identified in the request. Staff further requests delegated authority to grant additional technical amendments and approvals in upon receipt of documentation and other items required under NAC to occupy the building. This approval is consistent with the mechanism the Authority Board uses to permit the incorporation of pre-opening requirements for new schools into the charter contract without the delay and complexity attendant to additional SPCSA Board review.

A review of the school's current status with the Authority reveals that it was approved in 2013 prior to the adoption of AB205 and the new charter contract provisions of the charter school law. The school is still under a written charter instead of a charter contract. SB509 specifically permits a sponsor to require a holder of a written charter or charter contract that requests an amendment to agree to an amended and restated charter contract as a condition of approving such amendment requests.

Consequently, staff recommends that the Board make approval of this amendment request contingent upon the school executing an amended and restated charter contract which be effective January 1, 2016 and would remain in effect until May 5, 2019—the end date of the current written agreement. Consistent with the board's actions related to other schools in the portfolio, staff requests that the board set an enrollment cap based on the school's enrollment as laid out in the amendment request and incorporating all other standard language from the current model charter contract. Additionally, staff recommends that

the contract and performance framework specifically include the criteria set for in SB509 and other bills defining a low-performing charter or traditional public school and clarifying that a school can be placed into breach of contract or served with notice of closure based on persistent underperformance—including but not limited to performance which precedes the effective date of the charter contract. Staff request authority to work with counsel to develop language consistent with this intent and to make technical adjustments as necessary to ensure consistency with current law. Staff further request delegated authority to furnish the approved amendment language to the school and execute the final contract modification on behalf of the Board.

Chair Conaboy asked Dr. Buck about stories in the Las Vegas papers that showed concern about charter schools moving in to the Henderson area. Ryan Reeves, Academica, said that story was about a different site and a different school.

Director Gavin asked that the Authority approve the amendment with a provision that the school sign onto the Written Charter Contract as opposed to staying on the Written agreement.

Member McCord moved for approval of Pinecrest Academy’s amendment request pursuant to NAC 386.325 with the provision that Pinecrest sign onto a Charter Contract for the remainder of their charter term. Member Van seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 2 – Approval of the June 12, 2015 SPCSA Board Meeting Minutes

Chair Conaboy asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

Member Van moved for approval. Member McCord seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 6 – Infinite Campus Update

Traci House, Business Process Analyst and Director Gavin spoke about Infinite Campus. Director Gavin said the legislature did approve the statewide Infinite Campus implementation plan. Director Gavin acknowledged that there have been growing pains with the implementation of Infinite Campus for charter schools. He said the vast differences in each of the charter schools did create some problems with Infinite Campus. He said he hoped with the statewide implementation, the charter schools will be able to better use the Infinite Campus functions that suits them best.

Member Mackedon said the problems at the school sites have been with students being improperly inputted into the wrong school. This had created issues with the validity of the data in Infinite Campus because the crossover could produce incorrect report for schools.

Agenda Item 8 - Overview for development of Regulations by the Authority Board including but not limited to process, timeline, adoption, legislative requirements, workshops and public hearings

Greg Ott, Deputy Attorney General, spoke about the process the Authority would follow to create regulations since it had been given that power during 2015 Legislative session. He submitted these points for the record:

- Process is long and slow with 2 primary aims
 - Maximize the opportunity for public comment
 - Ensure permanent regulations do not conflict with existing laws
- Three types of Regs

- Permanent (NRS 233B.061)
- Temporary (NRS 233B.063(3))
- Emergency (NRS 233B.0613)
- Most of what the SPCSA does for the next year will be permanent.
- Agency submits a request to the Governor which he may endorse or reject
- Only exists for 120 days
- Require an emergency (life, health, safety)
- Very rarely used (know they exist but don't plan on using them)
- Temporary is only available between August 1 of an even numbered year and July 1 of the next odd numbered year.
- Expire automatically on November 1 of the next odd numbered year (identical permanent reg may be adopted).
- Process identical to the Permanent reg process, but no submission of language to LCB.
- Multi-step process with several requirements
 - Submission to LCB for language
 - Workshop
 - Public hearing
 - Final review by Legislative Committee
- Permanent Regulations must be submitted to LCB for official language.
- The LCB is supposed to deliver the approved language within 30 days of a request (NRS 233B.063(2))
- Language not needed for workshop, but is needed for public hearing
- Specific Notice Requirements (NRS 233B.0608)
 - Must post 15 before workshop
 - Cannot have workshop on the same day as a public hearing
 - Must post notice, small business impact statement
 - Must follow open meeting law procedures and take public comment
- Specific Notice Requirements
 - Approved Text must come from LCB
 - 30 Days Posting (NRS 233.B060) of intended action
 - Notice must be on required form (NAC 233B.010)
 - Must follow open meeting law procedures and take public comment
- After approval at a public hearing the Regulation is submitted to LCB for Legislative Commission Review (233B.067(1))
 - Leg. Comm. can reject or approve a regulation
 - If rejected it does not become a regulation, but the agency may request a written explanation
 - If accepted it is filed with the Secretary of State. At which time it becomes effective.

Agenda Item 21 – Adjournment

Chair Conaboy asked for a motion to adjourn. Member Van moved seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 3:55 pm

State Public Charter School Authority

Board Meeting

Carson City

7-13-2015

Name	Representing	Email Address for SPCSA List serve
John Vettel	NVVA	John@BywaysDAO.Com
Janie Winder	NCA	janie.winder@edgobaw.com
John Sonda	Argentum Partners	
Donna Wix	NDC	
Kathy Etchemendy	Imagination Station	Kathy@ISLC-US
Angela Moore	Imagination Station	angela@ISLC.US

State Public Charter School Authority

Board Meeting

Las Vegas

7-13-2015

Name	Representing	Email Address for SPCSA List serve
Elizabeth Dixon Host , Principal	Beacon Academy	elizabeth.dixon@bavv.org
Travis Cherry,	Beacon Academy of NV	travis.cherry@bavv.org
Tambre Tondryk, Principal	Beacon Academy of NV	tandre.tondryk@bavv.org
Africa Sanchez	Attorney, Beacon Academy	aficasanchez@law.com
Victoria Carreon	Gunn Center for Policy Priorities	vcarreon@gunncenter.org
Kirby Okuda	Neveda Virtual Academy	koku@nvacademy.org
Jim Coffey	NV Virtual Academy	jimcoffey@nvacademy.org
Ben Geertman	NV Virtual Academy	ben@nvacademy.org
Kara Hendricks	NV Virtual Academy	karendricks@nvacademy.org

Silvia Garcia	Founders Academy LV	sgarcia@csmci.com
Susan Fisher	MEW	SFISHER@MELWALW.COM
Seth Rau	Nevada Succeeds	seth@nadasucceeds.org
Laura Fiemann	CHARTER SCHOOLS DEV.	LFIEMANN@CNDG.ORG
Carol Leavitt	Founders Academy	Carol.leavitt@foundersacademylv.com
Lyn Reeves	Academica	
Rebecca Fitzgerald	Founders Academy LV	Tim.Fitzgerald@FoundersAcademyLV.com
Tim Fitzgerald	Founders Academy	Ivygirl.Abella@FoundersAcademyLV.com
Ivy Abella	Quest Academy	t.ferguson@questlv.com
Tiffany Ferguson	Brooks School	t900@womans@APL.COM
TAMI BASS	Equip Academy	ben.salkow@equipacademy.org
Ben Salkow	Coral Academy	nick@coralacademylv.org
Nick Sorisahn	Founders	METIAK@BAILEYKEANEVY.COM
MARA ABELLA	Pinecrest Academy	carrie.buck@pinecrestnv.org
Carrie Buck	Noel	Bridget.Phillips@coralacademylv.org
Bridget Phillip		

Dawn Curry	NV VIRTUAL ACADEMY	Vegas Curry 38 @ kntil.com
Denny Diamond	NVVA	DennyDiamond@nvvaacademy.org
Colin Brughurst	Academica	colin.brughurst@academicanv.com
Carolyn McInnes	NV. Virtual Academy	cmcintosh@nvvaacademy.org
Kymber Legron	Quest Academy	k.legron@questHV.com
LISA DZIERBICKI	NV. VIRTUAL ACADEMY	LDZIERBICKI@NVVAACADEMY.ORG
Brenda Flank	founders	.
Clayton Howell	Academica	clayton.howell@academicanv.com
Marbara Payne	NV. Virtual Academy	mpayne@nvvaacademy.org
Ricardo Jasso	Master Academy of NV	RJESSO@MATERACADEMYNV.ORG
Olivia Carbajal	Master Academy of NV	olivia.carbajal@materacademynv.org
Sheila Moulton	Master Academy of NV	moulton@materacademynv.org
Gene Smith	Nevada Virtual Academy	gsmith@nvvaacademy.org
Rosa Kubala	Founders Academy of Las Vegas	kubalabears@gmail.com
D. Orndorff	Founders Academy	debbi.orndorff@foundersacademynv.org
Danielle Marshall	Doral Academy - Cactus	danielle.marshall@doralacademynv.org

