

Career technical education a must for businesses to succeed

By Geoff Dornan
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MINDEN — Northern Nevada Development Authority members were told Wednesday Career and Technical Education is key to the success of Nevada students and businesses.

Bob Potts of the Governor's Office of Economic Development and Kristine Nelson of the state Department of Education said Nevada is on track to meet those needs.

At NNDA's monthly meeting at the Carson Valley Inn, Potts said the five-county sector of western Nevada is growing ahead of the

nation in every emerging sector of the economy from health care and IT to manufacturing.

"For all the emerging sectors other than tourism, gaming, entertainment, we have gained a lot of ground," he said adding wages in those sectors are "double or higher than entertainment jobs."

He said where CTE comes in is providing the qualified workforce to fill the growing number of jobs in Carson City, Washoe, Storey, Lyon and Douglas counties.

"That's what the focus of this is all about, what to do about the availability of a qualified workforce."

Potts said GOED's job and

that of the other partners from the universities and community colleges to businesses themselves is to identify the specific needs of those businesses so education and training programs can be tailored to meet those needs.

Nelson, who heads the education department's Office of Career Readiness, Adult Learning and Education, said by 2020, 58 percent of those jobs will require training beyond the traditional high school diploma — on job training, apprenticeship or technical certification classes. Under Gov. Brian Sandoval, she said, they're "aligning programs so that kids can get on those career

pathways, at the end of that highway, off-ramping into a middle to high wage career."

She said the goal is, "being sure we have kids that are prepared to enter the workforce."

Nelson said that's far different from the traditional "vocational education" programs of 30 years ago, that these students are graduating at a 91 percent rate.

"They're outperforming other students," she said, and earning the new College and Career Ready diploma.

She told the business leaders in the audience they may see young job applicants with that diploma in hand as soon as this coming May.

Deadline for NDOT grants Feb. 26

Nevada Appeal Capitol Bureau

Governments and nonprofit groups have a month to apply for the nearly \$6 million in federal transportation funds awarded through the Transportation Alternatives Program.

TAP awards funding to government agencies, tribal governments, school districts, private schools and nonprofit groups for a variety of projects.

Eligible projects include those that improve non-motorized mobility, historic preservation related to transportation, scenic accessibility and safe routes to school among others.

Infrastructure projects eligible include constructing traffic calming, accessibility to scenic areas and environmental management. Non-infrastructure projects that are eligible include those that improve ability of kindergarten through eighth grade students to bike or walk to school.

More details are available at www.nevadadot.com/tap.

DMV

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came out last week and, on Wednesday, reported the contract with Tech Mahindra would terminate in 60 days.

The good news, according to the audit, is as of July 2017, DMV had spent only \$13.5 million on the contract and most of that was for hardware and software that can be used no matter who's the contractor.

But DMV didn't escape some blame for the situation. Auditors reported

the department didn't ensure compliance with requirements, protocols and procedures in the contract including failing to impose binding due dates for steps in developing the project and not identifying eight of the 13 subcontractors used on the project.

No word was available on how long it would take to issue a new RFP and find a new contractor to do the modernization project which, over the coming five years, will cost a total of \$114 million.

READER SNAPSHOTS



COURTESY

Nicole Wiencek titled her photo "Dawn at the End of Fortune."

HONORED

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"Your actions and expertise that night and kindness and concern after is so appreciated."

Stokes also made sure to recognize those at CHS, Carson City and beyond who provided their support, monetary donations and prayers during and after the incident.

"It has been nothing shy of amazing," Ward-DeJoseph said.

Through GoFundMe accounts and fundraisers, the community raised more than \$94,000 to give to the families of the victims. The GoFundMe, started by a fellow student raised more than \$50,000 on its own, and schools in districts surrounding Carson even stepped up to raise funds and do their part to help.

"This will forever be in our

hearts," Stokes said.

The school board also listened to two presentations about improvement plans for the two-star elementary schools in Carson City.

Fremont and Empire elementary schools recently received a two-star rating from the Nevada Department of Education. The ratings are based on various factors of student achievement.

For both schools, the goal for 2018 was to raise numbers so 50 percent of students score proficient in math and English.

"We know proficiency is a ways away for us but we do know we can help our students grow and continue to close the gap to get closer to proficiency," said Empire Principal Susan Squires.

Part of the problem was attributed to the method of testing for second graders, Squires said. Previously, the assessments were read to

the students to complete it, but that has been changed so now the second graders have to read the tests to themselves.

"Taking away that support was difficult for them," Squires said.

However, they're working on improving those assessment scores. One way is having the teachers teach how to take those assessments so students aren't confused when they see the test.

"One thing our teachers do well is to help take a certain test, not to teach for the test but how to take it and prepare them in a way to take that certain test," Squires said.

One of the goals is to expose the students to grade level literature so they're familiar with it when they see the assessments. Squires said the students don't have to necessarily be reading at their grade level but they want them to be familiar with it so it's not as shocking and confusing when they see it on the assessments.

According to the school's assessments, 40 percent of students would've been proficient in the winter for English and 10 percent would've been proficient in math for Empire.

The next step, Squires said, is to continue to professionally develop with data discussions, writing instruction with authors

such as Gary Hogg, working on writing in math, grade level grading and planning and working on building better relationships with the students.

"(Our teachers) don't see that data as not so great, they see it as moving forward and making changes," Squires said. "We are only points away from the next level and they realize that and they are ready to put in the extra work to bump it up."

Over at Fremont Elementary, the sentiment and goals are similar.

Proficiency for the SBAC is projected at 36 percent and math projected at 17 percent for the winter. Principal Ward-DeJoseph said their goal is to have 50 percent proficiency for reading in 2018 and 30 percent or more in math.

"We have identified the root causes for low achievement," Ward-DeJoseph said. "This is our journey, it is messy, it's hard because we had to tear it back and look at our systems to see why it isn't aligned with our student growth."

She said they're hoping to set up more expectations and systems of communications, evidence of student learning and data analysis.

"We know it is a process ... our data discussion was brutal, it was tough," Ward-DeJoseph said. "How we go from good to great is a

process and we believe in our projections."

The Fremont principal also released the school's new vision, mission statement and guiding principles that will hopefully help them achieve those goals.

"Those five stars, we are headed in that direction, we are just missing a few stars right now," Ward-DeJoseph said.

In addition to the individual schools, Stokes also updated the board on the state of the district.

Some key points included student demographics, special programs comparisons, ACT scores, per pupil basic support numbers and more.

Stokes also said that enrollment has been increasing over the last four years. Enrollment in 2013 was 7,525 on Count Day in August and 7,723 for the 2017-2018 year. The district has lost 40 students since Count Day this year.

The district also saw this year an increase in employees, specifically with executive, classified and certified staff. Stokes reported the district had 897 employees in 2017 and 948 in 2018.

"Even though we are in the positive light, it doesn't mean we have enough to get what we need done," Stokes said.

There also has been an increase in daily average

attendance, however Carson is still lower than the state average.

In 2017, Nevada saw an average of 97 percent daily attendance while Carson only saw 94.7 percent. Stokes said the two-star schools play a factor in those numbers, as some of the star rating is based on constant absentees.

The high schools also have seen increased graduation rates in the last four years, In 2013, Carson City had a rate of 75.87 percent graduation rate, the state had a rate of 70.65 percent; in 2017, Carson City had a graduation rate of 83.9 percent, the state had a rate of 80.85 percent.

The graduation rates include Carson High, Pioneer High and the Adult Education program.

Carson High had a graduation rate of 93 percent this year, but Stokes said they can continue to keep doing better.

"Our graduation rates are like milking a cow, no matter how great you did that day, you still have to get back up in the morning and do it again," Stokes said.

He also informed the board of the goals the district has created for the upcoming year. The district wants to maintain the strategic plan, continue to focus on academic rigor, ongoing support for instruction, limiting new initiatives and continuing capital projects.

DEATH NOTICE

Mary Elizabeth Hale, 76 - of Reno, Nevada passed away on January 20, 2018 in Carson City, Nevada. Final arrangements entrusted to Walton's Funerals & Cremations Gardnerville, Nevada.

Sharon Faye Evans, age 72, of Carson City, NV passed away on January 18, 2018. Arrangements in the trusted care of Fitzhenry's Funeral Home.

Harold R. Rollings, age 85, of Gardnerville, NV passed away on January 20, 2018. Arrangements in the trusted care of Fitzhenry's Carson Valley Funeral Home.