**Legislative Update**

**Week 2: February 13, 2015**

The 2015 Nevada Legislature heard 49 bills in its first week (four days) of hearings and 95 bills during the second week. I don’t know if anyone is keeping records, but this may be a record. Both CCSD-sponsored bills (AB55 and SB77) were heard within the first 10 days of the session and we are hopeful that they will soon move through the process.

Here is a quick recap of a few of the bills that had hearings in committee this week.

**Monday, February 9**

Assembly Ways & Means

* The Public Employees’ Retirement System (PERS) presented their budget. Their presentation showed their methods for making the system more financially sound and explained the return of investment from both employer and employee contributions. PERS also reviewed the rate increase (2.25%) that it will need in order to continue to pay down future liabilities as well as to provide the benefit that is guaranteed to current and prospective retirees.

Assembly Education

* AB55, CCSD's bill that will create a temporary permit for teachers that will allow them six months to take exams required in Nevada for licensure, was heard in Assembly Education. The bill received support from other school districts, the Nevada Association of School Superintendents, the Nevada Association of School Boards, the Las Vegas Metro Chamber of Commerce and others. No one opposed the bill but there were a couple of suggestions by committee members for minor amendments.
* The Committee also heard two bills from the Department of Education, AB 27 and AB30. AB 27 will allow a person who is not a citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States but who is otherwise entitled to work in the United States pursuant to federal laws and regulations to teach if the school district proves it has a teacher shortage. AB30 makes various changes to the School Improvement Plans. Both bills were supported by education representatives.

**Tuesday, February 10**

Senate Education

* SB25, another Department of Education bill, was heard by the Senate Education Committee on Tuesday, February 10. The Department describes it as a “cleanup bill” to clarify various education statutes and include pre-K standards as a Department responsibility.

**Wednesday, February 11**

Assembly Education

* The Assembly Committee on Education began with State Superintendent of Instruction Dale Erquigua delivering the same PowerPoint he presented the day before in the Senate Committee on Education. The presentation laid out Governor Sandoval’s entire education agenda. There were some questions by the Committee, mainly dealing with the new Achievement District and Assemblyman Munford has some concern with the End of Course Exams.
* The Committee also heard a presentation by the Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE) on how to get more students to graduate college on time. Several issues were cited:
	+ The true cost of college.
	+ Remediation for those entering college
	+ Students taking too few credits and delaying their graduation
* NSHE also went over their *15 to Finish* campaign which encourages students to take more credit hours. Studies show that those who take on a full load each semester have a better chance of graduating and finishing college with a higher GPA.
* Two NSHE bills were heard: AB76 and AB111
	+ AB76 would make changes to veterans being able to attend college. Concerns were expressed about the time frame allowable for a veteran to attend college to get the reduced rate as many veterans don’t directly attend college once leaving the service.
	+ AB111 is a bill brought forward by Assmbyman Randy Kirner, which would increase the credit hour requirement for students to qualify for the Millennium Scholarship, a companion to NSHE’s *15 to Finish* program. There was significant opposition to his bill from groups representing students who currently can’t afford college and would be unable to take a full credit load due to work and family obligations.

**Thursday, February 12**

Senate Finance

A memorable hearing took place in Senate Finance as the State Treasurer presented an “alternative budget,” proposing a reduction of approximately $400 million from Governor Sandoval’s budget. Most of the items the State Treasurer identified for elimination were programs related to education and students, such as full-day kindergarten, Zoom schools, and funding for social workers, anti-bullying programs, and programs for autistic children. The presentation was met with bipartisan criticism, ranging from questions about the authority for the treasurer to present an alternate budget to harsh statements related to the proposed cuts. It was clear the majority of the committee members were not supportive of the alternative budget.

Senate Education

* The Nevada System of Higher Education presented their Complete College America program and discussed college affordability with the Senate Education Committee on Thursday. To see the presentation, you can find it on the Nevada Electronic Legislative Information System (NELIS) as described below.

**Friday, February 13**

Joint Meeting of Assembly Education and Senate Education

* The Nevada Department of Education made a presentation on Student Data Systems. The presentation covered the safeguards that are in place to keep student data protected, various reports that require the data collected and how the data is managed. If you are interested in viewing the slides, please click on this link: https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Meeting/2843.

**Coming Up**

The list below contains a wide variety of bills that may potentially impact schools, operations, or the education budget. For those interested primarily in curriculum issues, be sure to monitor the agendas of the standing education committees: **Assembly Education** (Monday and Wednesday at 3:15) and **Senate Education (**Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday at 3:30). Agendas are posted on the legislative website. Please be aware that schedules often change, so check the calendar feature on the legislative website frequently for the most current schedule. The bill numbers below are hyperlinks, and will take you NELIS page for the bill where you can read the text of the bill as well as associated materials.

**Monday, February 16, 2015**

AB3, AB54 Scheduled at  9:00 AM  in [Assembly Committee on Government Affairs](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Committee/62/Overview)

[AB115](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Bill/1432/Overview)     Scheduled at  1:30 PM  in [Assembly Committee on Commerce and Labor](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Committee/47/Overview)

[AB26](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Bill/1216/Overview), [AB107](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Bill/1383/Overview)     Scheduled at  3:15 PM  in [Assembly Committee on Education](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Committee/50/Overview)

**Tuesday, February 17, 2015**

[SB128](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Bill/1448/Overview), [SB133](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Bill/1467/Overview)     Scheduled at  3:30 PM  in [Senate Committee on Education](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Committee/66/Overview)

[AB58](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Bill/1280/Overview)     Scheduled at  8:30 AM  in [Assembly Committee on Government Affairs](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Committee/62/Overview)

**Wednesday, February 18, 2015**

[SB19](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Bill/1165/Overview)     Scheduled at  3:30 PM  in [Senate Committee on Legislative Operations and Elections](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Committee/59/Overview)

[SB66](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Bill/1244/Overview)     Scheduled at  1:30 PM  in [Senate Committee on Government Affairs](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Committee/65/Overview)

[AB117](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Bill/1427/Overview), [AB165](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Bill/1513/Overview)     Scheduled at  3:15 PM  in [Assembly Committee on Education](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Committee/50/Overview)

[AB52](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Bill/1274/Overview)     Scheduled at  1:30 PM  in [Assembly Committee on Health and Human Services](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Committee/52/Overview)

[SB137](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Bill/1475/Overview)     Scheduled at  8:30 AM  in [Senate Committee on Commerce, Labor and Energy](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Committee/68/Overview)

**Thursday, February 19, 2015**

[AB106](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Bill/1382/Overview)     Scheduled at  8:30 AM  in [Assembly Committee on Government Affairs](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Committee/62/Overview)

[2618](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL//78th2015/Budget/1319/Overview), [2699](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL//78th2015/Budget/958/Overview)     Scheduled at  8:00 AM  in [Senate Committee on Finance and Assembly Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittees on K-12/Higher Education/CIPS](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Committee/48/Overview)

[2618](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL//78th2015/Budget/1319/Overview), [2699](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL//78th2015/Budget/958/Overview)     Scheduled at  8:00 AM  in [Assembly Committee on Ways and Means and Senate Committee on Finance, Subcommittees on K-12/Higher Education/CIPS](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Committee/61/Overview)

[SB93](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Bill/1323/Overview)     Scheduled at  3:30 PM  in [Joint Meeting of the Senate Committee on Revenue and Economic Development and Assembly Committee on Taxation](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Committee/53/Overview)

**Monday, February 23, 2015**

[AB120](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Bill/1434/Overview), [AB121](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Bill/1435/Overview)     Scheduled at  3:15 PM  in [Assembly Committee on Education](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Committee/50/Overview)

**Wednesday, February 25, 2015**

[AB112](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Bill/1417/Overview)     Scheduled at  3:15 PM  in [Assembly Committee on Education](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015/Committee/50/Overview)

**Want to Learn More?**

In case you didn’t know:

The [Nevada Electronic Legislative Information System (NELIS](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015)) is a tool on the Nevada legislative website that will assist you in navigating the 2015 Legislative Session. With hundreds of bills being proposed, NELIS helps organize information so you can stay on top of the issues that matter most to you. NELIS is useful because it houses all legislative and committee information in one place making it easy to find and navigate the business of the Nevada Legislature.

NELIS is also very useful as a research tool. You can revisit hearings from previous legislative sessions, read the minutes of the meeting, and review any documentation that was provided as support material. Many current bills build on the actions of previous legislative sessions, and NELIS is the portal you can use to fully inform yourself on the issues of yesterday and today.

Specifically, NELIS has several important components to help you keep track of the 120-day session. They include:

* **Schedule:** This section will give you up to the minute information on the daily meetings occurring during the legislative day. This includes both committee and floor sessions.
* **Bills:** This section allows you to search any bill or Bill Draft Request (BDR) that has been proposed during the Legislative Session. All you need to know is the bill number, the bill name, or who the bill is sponsored by. Not only can you get the bill language but you can see which committee will hear it next, how much the bill will cost, or any backup material other interest groups may have provided during their testimony.
* **Committee:** This section allows you to search any hearing or bill that is assigned to a specific committee. It will also give you information on who sits on the committee and when it meets.
* **Budgets**: For those interested in the financial side of government, this section lets you view, down the to dollar, the fiscal makeup of Nevada’s government. Here you can view the Governor’s proposed budgets as well as the budget of any state agency.