

Nevada is one of the 10 states selected to participate in New Skills for Youth (NSFY), an initiative enhancing state efforts to increase the number of kids across the country who are prepared for success in both college and career. NSFY is a \$75 million, five-year initiative developed by JPMorgan Chase in collaboration with the Council of Chief State School Officers, Advance CTE and Education Strategy Group.

In Phase One of the initiative, the Nevada NSFY team created a strategic plan for career readiness, formalized processes for employer engagement, and focused on restructuring state-level organizations to accomplish this work.<sup>1</sup> Phase Two of the NSFY initiative began in January 2017. This snapshot profiles Nevada's progress in the first year of Phase Two, including:

- **Aligning workforce development with economic diversification efforts:** The state is shifting focus to more diversified "New Nevada" industries and efforts to train the local workforce to meet the needs of those industries.
- **Promoting career readiness with aligned diplomas:** After the Nevada Legislature passed Assembly Bill 7 (A.B. 7), the Nevada State Board of Education prescribed criteria for a new college- and career-ready high school diploma.
- **Improving communications:** Nevada is leading new communications initiatives focused on encouraging students and parents to explore options for careers that may require a four-year college experience or postsecondary job training that offers a head start on a career. The goal is to change the perceptions and conversations of Nevadans surrounding career pathways and opportunities in the state.

## *Foundations for Career Pathways in Nevada*

Nevada joined the NSFY initiative at a time of major economic transition for the state. With an economy still heavily dependent on the gaming, tourism and mining sectors, Nevada was hit hard by the decrease in consumer spending that came with the economic recession of 2008. Unemployment soared to 12 percent, and 170,000 jobs were lost.<sup>2</sup> As such, Nevada is working to diversify its economic focus from solely historically significant industries and occupation staples toward a New Nevada focused on accelerating the growth of other high-priority, in-demand areas of the economy, including information technology, health care, manufacturing and others.

Equipping the workforce with the skills necessary to support these industries is a core priority of Governor Brian Sandoval's agenda. In 2013, Governor Sandoval established the Office of Economic Development (GOED) to begin aligning education and workforce opportunities with New Nevada industries. To further this work, the governor issued an executive order in 2016 establishing the Office of Workforce Innovation for the New Nevada (OWINN), tasked with creating a skilled, diverse and

## Nevada Industry Sector Councils

- Aerospace and Defense
- Natural Resources
- Health Care and Medical Services
- Information Technology
- Manufacturing and Logistics
- Mining and Materials
- Tourism, Gaming and Entertainment
- Construction

aligned workforce. The executive order also mandated the creation and restructuring of Industry Sector Councils, which convene representatives from business, education and labor to make data-driven recommendations concerning sector-specific workforce needs.<sup>3</sup> In Phase One, the Nevada NSFY team worked with OWINN and GOED to engage the eight Councils and establish guidelines for their work on creating career pathways.

Through these efforts, OWINN and GOED developed a framework for high-quality career pathways called Learn & Earn Advanced-career Pathways (LEAP) and designed model pathways in two sectors: manufacturing and life sciences.<sup>4</sup> In 2017, LEAP was integrated into Nevada's NSFY work, and the state NSFY team plans to develop additional LEAP pathways in information technology and health care in the year ahead.

In 2017, OWINN was codified into Nevada statute with the focus of designing career pathways, scaling and overseeing registered apprenticeships, validating industry-recognized credentials, assessing workforce policies, and leveraging labor market and workforce data. OWINN's codification in state statute lays the foundation for continued workforce coordination and collaboration beyond Governor Sandoval's term.

## *Creating Policies for Success*

While Nevada's accountability infrastructure was built to meet the requirements of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, state leaders recognize that more is needed to meaningfully measure student outcomes and experiences. The NSFY team is now working to improve the state's data collection capacity, but a lack of coordinated information has not stopped Nevada from planning and pursuing new policies.

New legislation has set in motion changes related to data collection and career readiness. Senate Bill 458, passed in 2017, replaced the P-20W Advisory Council with the P-20W Research Data System Advisory Committee and moved the longitudinal data system to OWINN to further deepen alignment to increase outcomes.<sup>5</sup> This shift was initiated after state leadership recognized that the duties of the Advisory Council, which had been established in 2007 to assist with coordination among elementary, secondary and higher education, were not aligned with the data collection needs of the education system.

The new P-20W Research Data System Advisory Committee is tasked with developing and overseeing a statewide longitudinal data system that will help to inform planning and advisory services for workforce development. It will also serve as the gatekeeper of state education accountability data with biennial reports and a website that will track research initiatives and progress. This work will help the state track enrollment and completion of career pathways and determine how students fare in the New Nevada economy once they graduate, which the state is not currently set up to do.

Another major boost to career readiness policy in Nevada was the passage of A.B. 7 in early 2017. A.B. 7 not only ensures that Nevada's education law is in line with the Every Student Succeeds Act but also directs the Nevada State Board of Education to prescribe the criteria for a student to receive a college- and career-ready high school diploma.

In December 2017, the Nevada State Board of Education adopted regulations prescribing said criteria (these regulations were later approved by the Nevada Legislative Commission in February 2018). The new diploma builds upon Nevada’s advanced diploma and incorporates Career Technical Education (CTE), Advanced Placement, work-based learning (WBL) and dual enrollment courses that can be applied toward high school graduation credits. It also requires students to demonstrate postsecondary readiness by earning a college readiness endorsement, a career readiness endorsement or both.

- A **college-ready endorsement** reflects that the student has completed certain coursework or obtained experience that makes him or her qualified for and prepared to succeed in college without the need for remediation.
- A **career-ready endorsement** reflects that the student has completed certain coursework or obtained certain experience that makes him or her qualified for and prepared to succeed in postsecondary job training or education in high-demand occupations.

### Other Legislative Wins in Nevada in 2017

- **Assembly Bill 482** calls on the State Board of Education to define criteria for awarding CTE grants aligned with high-priority, in-demand, regionally specific CTE programs.
- **Senate Bill 19** requires all local education agencies to enter into agreements with institutions of higher education to offer dual credit opportunities.
- **Senate Bill 66** authorizes local education agencies to provide WBL opportunities and allows students to earn one or more credits for completing WBL.

The success of these policies depends heavily on coordination among a number of agencies and stakeholders within the state. While leadership from the governor’s office has been crucial for instilling a sense of urgency and a need for accountability, contributions from Nevada businesses and industries; the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation; the Nevada Department of Education; GOED; OWINN; and the Nevada System of Higher Education have been necessary to ensure that state policies comply with federal mandates and work to the advantage of all regions in the state.

## Focusing on Communications

In addition to strong inter-agency coordination, informing students, parents and employers is essential to ensure the success of these new initiatives. In Phase Two, the Nevada NSFY team began developing a public awareness campaign and communications plan to promote the benefits of NSFY initiatives,

SOC	Occupational Title	2016 Wages	2016 Employment	New Jobs in Occupation Due to Growth by 2024	Total Openings Due to Growth and Replacements by 2024	Jobs Above or Below National Average	Typical Entry-level Education
49-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers, and Repairers	\$33.53	2,960	641	1,210	(777)	High school diploma or equivalent
51-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers	\$27.38	2,700	714	1,110	(2,386)	High school diploma or equivalent

Figure 1: Communicating labor market information in Nevada

the new college- and career-ready high school diploma, WBL programs, CTE and career readiness opportunities. The state plans to inform students and employers about the alignment of career pathways to promote partnerships between schools and employers and gain important insight to develop high-quality career pathways that will lead to sustainable economic development in Nevada.

Additionally, GOED is providing key labor market information (LMI) to inform and strategically guide the development of Nevada's priority industries. Included are timely data on current job counts, salaries, projected openings, and any technological or policy advancements that may affect the Career Clusters®. Additionally, this information is being provided at the sub-state level to better meet the specific demands of Nevada's regional economies.

Nevada's LMI strategy has benefited from heavy cross-sector involvement, and Industry Sector Councils have played a major role in facilitating communications between the state government and local industries. Industry Sector Council meetings provide an opportunity for private-sector representatives to discuss workforce progress and challenges, as well as review state LMI. The renewed push for industry involvement with LMI and priority sectors was helped by specific and consistent communications from Governor Sandoval. Optimizing the use of available LMI has played a key role in coordinating statewide industry alignment and enabled OWINN to publish a detailed report on major growth industries and salaries in 2017.<sup>6</sup>

## *Looking Ahead*

With Governor Sandoval set to leave office after the gubernatorial election in November 2018, the NSFY team will focus on developing plans that are sustainable and easily maintained during the leadership transition. With the mechanisms for better data collection in place, the state will continue gathering information to improve career readiness and support for priority industries.

Nevada has also expressed a commitment to improving WBL opportunities. In October 2017, the National Governors Association selected Nevada as one of six states to participate in a policy academy focused on scaling WBL.<sup>7</sup> OWINN is working closely with a wide range of state-level leaders to scale high-quality WBL. In conjunction with planned improvements to data collection and academic requirements, an improved WBL infrastructure will support the creation of high-quality career pathways for students throughout Nevada.

Another priority for the year ahead is expanding the accessibility of high-quality career pathways. In 2018, Nevada plans to leverage the LEAP career pathways framework to design additional career pathways in New Nevada industries such as information technology and health care as well as scale existing LEAP pathways statewide.

Additionally, Nevada plans to use NSFY funding to create a one-stop shop to help students, educators and business access resources related to the state's career readiness programming and WBL learning opportunities.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://careertech.org/resource/nevada-phase-one-nsfy-snapshot>

<sup>2</sup> <https://usamoneytoday.com/the-20-fastest-growing-jobs-in-nevada-in-2017/>

<sup>3</sup> [http://gov.nv.gov/News-and-Media/Executive-Orders/2016/EO\\_-2016-08-Order-Regarding-Workforce-Development/](http://gov.nv.gov/News-and-Media/Executive-Orders/2016/EO_-2016-08-Order-Regarding-Workforce-Development/)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.diversifynevada.com/programs-resources/leap>

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Session/79th2017/Bills/SB/SB458\\_EN.pdf](https://www.leg.state.nv.us/Session/79th2017/Bills/SB/SB458_EN.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> <https://careertech.org/resource/putting-LMI-right-hands-guide>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.nga.org/cms/2017/news/states/support/work/based/learning/employment/opportunities>