



NEVADA

2018 SNAPSHOT

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 learners across the country who are prepared for success in both college and career. NSFY is a \$75 million national initiative developed by JPMorgan Chase & Co. in collaboration with the Council of Chief State School Officers, Advance CTE and Education Strategy Group.

Since the start of the initiative in 2016, the Nevada NSFY team has planned and formalized processes to ensure college and career readiness and to increase local employer engagement.¹ This effort has included aligning workforce development with “New Nevada” industry sectors; implementing the new college- and career-ready (CCR) high school diploma; and raising awareness of aligned career pathway initiatives among students, parents, educators, employers and communities.

In 2018, Nevada focused mainly on completing legislative policy work gained from education laws passed in the 2017 Nevada legislative session and implementing the following key strategies:

- **Standing up a formalized, statewide work-based learning (WBL) system:** In 2017, Senate Bill 66 (S.B. 66) formalized WBL in secondary education statewide. The Nevada team is engaging local WBL coordinators designated in each of Nevada’s 17 school districts to assess existing opportunities and develop more cohesive offerings and employer engagements across the state.
- **Implementing the CCR high school diploma:** In 2018, Nevada continued implementation of Assembly Bill 7 (A.B. 7), which directed the Nevada State Board of Education to prescribe requirements for a new CCR diploma in the state. In 2018, Nevada schools issued the first CCR diplomas and expect that approximately 6,500 Nevada graduates will earn the CCR diploma in 2019.
- **Operationalizing career pathways alignment:** The Nevada team has been working with WestEd on an analysis and inventory of all existing CTE programs and career pathways to identify gaps in alignment and opportunities for students. The Nevada team will use this analysis to align, coordinate and integrate education, employment and training programs to meet the needs of Nevadans.

The Nevada Context

The success of Nevada’s NSFY work is directly connected to former Governor Brian Sandoval’s economic diversification efforts. During his tenure, Governor Sandoval pushed the state to augment the historically staple industries of hospitality, tourism and mining with what his office named New Nevada industries: aerospace and defense, health, manufacturing and logistics, information

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technology and natural resources technologies.² In addition to this focus, Governor Sandoval identified four priority career pathways in his Executive Order 2016-08, which became the focus of career pathway development in Nevada: advanced manufacturing, education, health care and information technology.

The Office of Economic Development (GOED) and the Governor’s Office of Workforce Innovation for the New Nevada (OWINN) have played key roles in ensuring that workforce development efforts are aligned with New Nevada industries. In the first two years of NSFY, the Nevada Department of Education (NDE) worked closely with both GOED and OWINN to lay the policy framework for career readiness initiatives, resulting in several legislative wins in 2017. These wins included the formalization of the CCR high school diploma by the State Board of Education,³ the revision of the standard high school diploma with the addition of two required CCR flex credits, and the formalization of WBL programs throughout the state.⁴

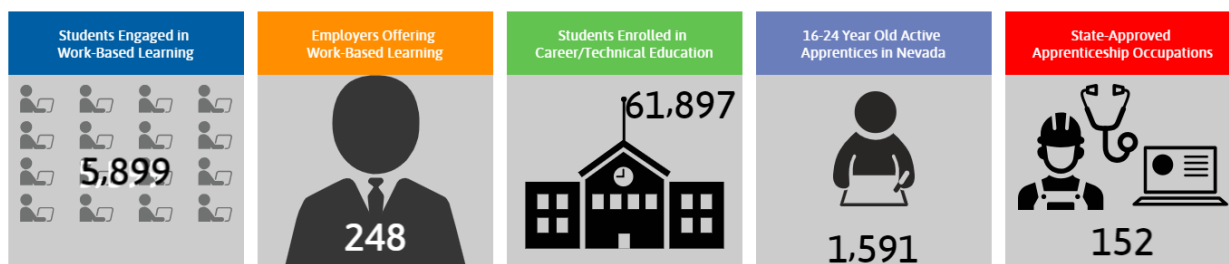
In 2018, NDE launched LifeWorks, its new brand for the college and career readiness initiatives that were implemented under NSFY. LifeWorks promotes the new CCR diploma, WBL programs, industry-recognized credentials, and other college and career readiness opportunities under one umbrella to present a statewide cohesive and collaborative vision for college and career readiness that engages learners and educators alike.⁵

Standing Up a Formalized Statewide WBL System

Driven by the need for stronger pipelines into the New Nevada workforce, OWINN identified WBL as a key strategy in improving college and career readiness for youth. Governor Sandoval set a statewide target of engaging 55,000 young adults in the 16-29 age range to complete some form of WBL by 2025 — including career exploration, career preparation and career training.⁶

While learners across Nevada have been able to participate in WBL for years, these programs have not been designed or implemented in a formal or cohesive manner statewide. Recognizing that an effective WBL framework would require cross-sector cooperation and buy-in from secondary, postsecondary and employers alike, the Governor’s Office moved to formalize WBL through legislative action in 2017. S.B. 66 laid the groundwork for establishing a statewide WBL system and expanded opportunities in schools and communities across the state. Specifically, the legislation allows students to earn credit for WBL and permits school districts and public charter schools to apply for funding to support the delivery of WBL opportunities.⁷

Additionally, S.B. 66 calls for a network of district-level WBL coordinators to engage with schools, employers and learners in their regions. In 2018, the NSFY team worked with the 17 district-designated WBL coordinators and provided technical assistance and support through workshops and webinars.



Nevada’s WBL hub documents the number of student engagements across the state.
Source: LifeWorksNV.org

To ensure consistent rollout throughout the state, S.B. 66 also lays out an accountability framework for school districts to follow. After gaining approval from local school boards, districts must submit applications for their WBL programs to the Nevada State Board of Education for review and approval. Schools are also required to submit bi-annual reports detailing the number of students enrolled in WBL programs and identifying the local employers that are involved. By the end of 2018, Clark County, Washoe County and Carson City — responsible for 90 percent of the state’s students — had submitted their applications to the State Board for approval.

In 2018, NDE engaged in a statewide communications campaign to ensure consistent implementation of high-quality WBL opportunities. This campaign included the release of a user guide for school administrators that defines core elements for the implementation and evaluation of WBL.⁸ OWINN also launched a one-stop, online WBL hub in October 2018 to facilitate connections of learners with WBL opportunities and the dissemination of resources. The platform, LifeWorksNV.org, is designed to help students and out-of-work youth to identify and apply for internships, apprenticeships and other WBL opportunities with local employers. NSFY funding will support the launch of a mobile app for students and parents to engage with the website.

To take advantage of this new WBL hub and expand the number of employers that will participate in career awareness and WBL opportunities, the NSFY team funded an employer engagement specialist in OWINN. NDE will soon request applications from employer-facing organizations (e.g., chambers of commerce, regional development authorities) to support their efforts to identify new employers that want to offer WBL opportunities through the hub.

Nevada’s efforts to scale WBL statewide were accelerated in 2018 through a partnership with electric car manufacturer Tesla. As part of a statewide campaign to engage educators and learners in Nevada, Tesla hosted high school students in a two-year manufacturing apprenticeship and collaborated with NDE to provide teachers with training and externship opportunities.⁹

In the 2017-18 school year, 3,948 students participated in some form of WBL, and this number is expected to increase in the coming years. The implementation of new reporting practices is also helping schools and the state better track student and employer participation in WBL activities.

Implementing the CCR High School Diploma

In 2018, the NSFY team rolled out the new CCR diploma, which was developed following the passage of A.B. 7 in 2017.¹⁰ The CCR diploma sets higher standards and expectations than the traditional high school diploma and puts in place incentives and accountability mechanisms to ensure that graduates are fully prepared to enter postsecondary education and/or the workforce. The CCR diploma is awarded upon graduation from high school and is recognized by employers in the state as a credential of value.

The State Board of Education adopted criteria for the CCR diploma in December 2017. The criteria prescribe that high school students must complete all of the requirements for the current advanced diploma, with two of the required units of credit completion in advanced coursework such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, dual credit, Career Technical Education (CTE), WBL or foreign language courses. Additionally, students must prove college and career readiness by obtaining one or both of the required endorsements:

- A college-ready endorsement, meaning that students have achieved entry-level non-remedial benchmark assessment scores established by the Nevada Board of Regents; and/or

- A career-ready endorsement, which shows that students have achieved proficiency on a career readiness assessment, satisfied requirements for the issuance of a professional certificate or obtained an industry-recognized credential.

Despite a short implementation period, schools have been quick to adopt the CCR diploma. By the end of the 2017-18 academic year, less than a year after the criteria were approved, Nevada schools graduated 37 students with CCR diplomas. By the 2019-20 academic year, Nevada hopes to see 6,500 CCR diplomas awarded.

Ultimately, NDE aims to integrate the CCR diploma into academic and career planning across the state. NDE is offering counselor training sessions for school districts and is conducting a widespread public awareness campaign targeted at parents and students to help incorporate CCR criteria into academic planning from middle school on. In FY 18 and 19, the Nevada Legislature authorized approximately \$3 million in incentive grants and reimbursements to help schools and districts promote and implement the CCR diploma.

Operationalizing Career Pathways Alignment

To ensure that the local workforce is aligned with the needs of New Nevada industries, the Nevada NSFY team has set a target of ensuring that 60 percent of students have access to high-quality career pathways aligned to high-wage, high-skill and in-demand occupations by the end of 2019. The NSFY team plans to meet this goal through targeted funding and aligned educational program development and offerings that are focused on developing new career pathways, transforming existing career pathways, and/or phasing out non-aligned career pathways.

A.B. 482 established this target and aligned funding in 2017, and Nevada plans to leverage implementation of the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act (Perkins V) to make further progress toward this goal. Under Perkins V, school districts and other local recipients are required to conduct a comprehensive local needs assessment that relates local workforce needs to program offerings and funding based on workforce data and labor market information. Nevada plans to use the local application to align CTE programs of study with high-wage, high-skill and in-demand occupations.

A critical component of NSFY's work in this area has been the development of Learn and Earn Advanced-career Pathways (LEAP), the state's standard framework for career pathways. LEAP identifies five essential components to ensure that students are aware of their options, gain industry-specific training, and are able to successfully enter and exit pathways throughout their careers.¹¹ Since 2017, NSFY has developed model career pathways for advanced manufacturing, education, life sciences and information and communications technology.

Having first set these crucial design pieces into place, the NSFY team began the process of categorizing and mapping high-quality career pathways to labor market

NDE's Criteria for Quality CTE Programs

1. Career guidance
2. Program and instruction (standards and aligned curriculum)
3. Leadership development
4. Qualified personnel
5. Program planning and promotion
6. Facilities, equipment and instructional materials and supplies
7. Community, business and industry partnerships
8. Evaluation systems and accountability
9. Industry-recognized credentials
10. Alignment to postsecondary programs
11. Alignment to priority career pathways identified by OWINN
12. Alignment to workforce training needs — e.g., high-demand occupations

needs in 2018. This process includes conducting an inventory of current career pathways and evaluating their connections to postsecondary opportunities and their culmination in industry-recognized credentials of value. By evaluating the course requirements, underlying competencies and rigor of existing career pathways, this mapping inventory will assist the state in assessing the alignment between high school and postsecondary opportunities and the workforce needs of local priority industries. The inventory will help the NSFY team gain a clearer idea of which career pathways are providing students skills that are beneficial to the New Nevada vision and which career pathways may need to be restructured and/or phased out.

Guided by these findings, NDE will embark on a “barnstorming tour” to help local education leaders transition career pathway offerings to meet expectations for quality and labor market alignment. The objective of the tour is to help schools transform career pathway offerings in line with the needs of the state economy. The Nevada team has been careful to approach this career pathways transformation effort in a way that does not limit opportunity in rural, urban and resource-limited districts.

Looking Ahead

With the policy foundation in place, Nevada directs its focus in 2019, the final year of the NSFY initiative, to the sustainable implementation of WBL and the continued promotion of the CCR diploma and high-quality career pathways. By the end of the year, the NSFY team intends to finish the inventory and assessment of career pathways and will begin working with local districts (prioritizing the three largest districts) and postsecondary institutions to align career pathways with the needs of local priority industries. Additionally, the Nevada NSFY team aims to use the career pathways inventory to expand access to high-quality career pathways — including new career pathways in the priority areas of manufacturing, education, technologies and health care — to 60 percent of students by the end of 2019.

The NSFY team is also working to smooth the transition of existing initiatives to Nevada’s new governor, Steve Sisolak, who took office in January 2019. Governor Sisolak has expressed his commitment to furthering the state’s college and career readiness initiatives, and the NSFY team is engaging the new administration to raise awareness of the NSFY work carried out thus far. To ensure the sustainability of priority programs through OWINN and the newly established LifeWorks brand, NDE has also requested permanent state funding for NSFY staff in its 2020-21 budget request.

Acknowledgements

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