

# A PROSPEROUS NEVADA BUILT ON A COHESIVE SYSTEM THAT WORKS FOR ITS PEOPLE AND EMPLOYERS

**REPORT FOR THE NATIONAL  
GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION  
WORKFORCE INNOVATION  
NETWORK GRANT**

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## The National Governors Association WIN Grant Scope and Opportunity

Nevada was the recipient of a National Governors Association Workforce Innovation Network (WIN) grant to put together a cross-agency team and engage outside counsel to analyze the economic impact of COVID-19 and the state's current efforts to build a strong workforce for its current and future economy. Based on this analysis, the charge was to make recommendations to impact both short- and long-term outcomes in the education to workforce pipeline and related issues. This report is not an assessment of what worked and what did not in the state's response to the economic impact of COVID. Through analysis of data and countless discussions and interviews with state and local leaders (**see Appendix for list of interviewees**) across Nevada, this report provides a picture of the challenges and opportunities the state faces as it responds to a changing economy and becomes better prepared for better times as well as the next downturn. Based on this view of the landscape, recommendations were made to strengthen current efforts in the state, where appropriate, and look to research and best practices from other states to fill gaps to build a more robust and resilient education to workforce system with the necessary wraparound services to put far more Nevadans on the path towards economic and personal success.

This report could not have been written without the generosity of time, insights, and a common commitment to improve outcomes across the state from all the state and local leaders interviewed. The challenges facing this state and nation feel far more difficult to address than usual. To meet these challenges, state and local government agencies, along with their partners in the public and private sectors, need to find ways to achieve better results for the state's families, workforce, and its employers. To do this, there must be greater coordination and collaboration around the ideas that work, whether already in state or adapted from other states. Nevada has the leadership to accomplish great things for all Nevadans and this report should provide them with the data, best practices, and motivation to achieve a more prosperous future for all Nevadans.

Throughout this report, examples of best practices, research reports, and other resources are hyperlinked and underlined for easy access.



## Executive Summary

Nevada is in the middle of an economic transformation. Its economy has been slowly evolving from one historically dominated by gaming, accommodations, and mining to a more diverse economy that is building upon that history as it diversifies into healthcare, logistics, natural resources, IT, and manufacturing. Unfortunately, its workforce, and the projections for the education of those young people in the pipeline are not on target to meet the projected credential needs of current and future employers.

With an economy that was built on gaming, hospitality, and mining, a significant percentage of working age adults in these fields had good wages without having to obtain a post-secondary credential or degree. Whether known or not by Nevadans, its economy is changing. The state has a choice to respond with a big vision and well-coordinated strategic actions or stick with gradual changes regardless of the impact on its people or economy. Governor Sisolak has made good jobs and a strong economy a center piece of his administration. His leadership has continued the state's economic evolution to diversify its economy and types of jobs that Nevadans will benefit from into the future. To keep up with the state's economic diversification, it needs to accelerate its efforts on strengthening its education and workforce training efforts aligned to the needs of its diversifying employers.

Nevada experienced the largest economic impact of any state from COVID-19 with an unemployment rate at the low point of the pandemic that exceeded 30%. While that rate has fallen significantly, the [state unemployment rate is still 50<sup>th</sup> out of the 50 states and the District of Columbia as of December 2021](#). The impact on employment has not been evenly felt across the state nor across demographics. The residents of Clark County were hit economically the hardest by COVID and are still experiencing the highest unemployment rate in the state at 6.3% as of November 2021 with the expectation that the unemployment rate will continue its downward trend. While more detailed data is still pending, it is expected that when those rates are broken down by demographics, single mothers, women of color, black men, and young people will still be experiencing very high unemployment rates.

Nevada is stepping up to meet its many challenges with efforts across state government and in partnership with local government, agencies, community-based organizations, and the private sector. It is using the expansive amount of federal resources to attempt to meet the needs of residents across the state to help them get back on their feet and stride successfully into the future. While these efforts have made a lot of progress in bringing the unemployment rate down and getting people back to work, the make up of the economy, education level of Nevadans, and weaknesses in the state's systems continues to create hurdles for the economic success of its workforce and employers.

These challenges also create new opportunities. Governor Sisolak is pushing to continue to diversify the economy, strengthen job training efforts, and expand social service programs.

**To build on this work this report's recommendations are built on five premises:**

- 1) more education and credentials aligned to the needs of employers better prepare individuals for success in a changing economy;
- 2) education and workforce training are not the only solutions for individuals that leave the workforce, especially for women with children that need affordable childcare;

- 3) without more pathway jobs to the middle class, the use of education and job training to get people out of poverty will continue to feel like a game of musical chairs;
- 4) systems typically get the results they were built for, so government needs to reimagine and bring about an effective education to workforce system with the necessary wraparound services; and
- 5) what happens today in a child's life impacts their educational and economic opportunities later in life.

Based on these building blocks, this report offers recommendations relevant to the state's current and future economy to put all Nevadans on a path towards success.

## **Recommendations for Meeting the Challenges of Today and Tomorrow**

### **Achieve a Bold Vision in Creating the Workforce and Economic Opportunities to Accelerate all Nevadans into the Middle Class and Beyond**

**Recommendation** - Broadly articulate a strong state economic transformation and workforce readiness vision and establish aggressive, but reachable attainment goals, broken out by key demographics.

**Recommendation** - Set goals and strategies to benefit those historically most negatively impacted by economic downturns.

**Recommendation** - Build consistent momentum and buy-in around the vision and kick it off with a summit, or regional summits in the north and south. Strengthen the capacity to achieve a "One Vision - One Voice" message and share specific expectations around attainment goals, coordination, actions, resources, partnerships, and accountability.

### **Strengthen the Collaboration of the Key State and Local Partners to Multiply the Impact of the Education to Workforce System and Wraparound Services**

**Recommendation** - Strengthen the role and value of the Governor's Workforce Development Board.

**Recommendation** - Invigorate a sub-cabinet focused on education, workforce, and wraparound services.

**Recommendation** - Move the Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation back to the Governor's Office to ensure the Governor has the staff capacity to coordinate efforts around an improved education to workforce system with wraparound services.

**Recommendation** - Map the education to workforce system and wraparound services to clarify roles, responsibilities, and clear lines of accountability to achieve better outcomes.

**Recommendation** - Relaunch WIOA Sector Councils and ensure their voices are incorporated into the work of GWDB to ensure strong input from employers on how the public and private sectors can work together to strengthen job training and employment in the major emerging and mature sectors.

**Recommendation** - GOWINN, as quickly as capacity will permit, should launch a fifth Sector Council representing tourism, gaming, and accommodations. This Council should inform state agency, educational partners, and the private sector on how to help employees and employers in this sector support the transformation of the workforce to minimize dramatic swings in employment from economic downturns and ensure a wide variety of training opportunities are available for individuals whose jobs are transformed or phased out.

**Recommendation** - Reconsider separating the state's community colleges from NSHE.

### **Strengthen the Integrated Longitudinal Data System to Improve Outcomes**

**Recommendation** - Develop a state data dashboard/system that meets the needs of key leaders throughout the state to improve the policies, programs, and budgets related to education, workforce, and wraparound social services.

### **Strengthen the Delivery of Workforce Readiness Services Through Greater Integration of Essential Services, Utilization of Technology, Expansion of Co-located Staff, and Enhancement of Training of Case Managers and Cross-Cutting Navigators**

**Recommendation** - Align and incentivize educational paths, credentials, and degrees with the needs of employers and provide the wraparound supports needed for success.

**Recommendation** - Build a transparent system to expand the number and track industry recognized credentials of value.

**Recommendation** - Strengthen the state's WIOA One Stop system through greater integration of services and utilization of technology.

**Recommendation** - Help more workers get back to work through incentives and childcare subsidies. Also strengthen the childcare workforce by increased training, wage subsidies, and refundable tax credits.

**Recommendation** - Strengthen the state's WIOA One Stop system through expansion of co-located staff and enhancement of training for case managers and cross-cutting navigators.

## Tackle Long-Term Educational Issues that Can Minimize Future Economic Challenges for Low-Income Nevadans

**Recommendation** - Accelerate and expand the work of the NSHE and NDE Teacher Pipeline Task Force, the CCSD Superintendent's Teacher Recruitment and Retention Commission, and other school districts' efforts to prepare several thousand highly qualified teachers, especially teachers of color.

**Recommendation** - GOED and DETR should utilize their resources and expertise to support the expansion and speed of NDE's and NSHE's educator preparation pipeline initiative.

**Recommendation** - Build on the lessons Nevada educators and school districts learned from virtual learning during COVID to enhance the online options that students can use to reduce the amount of learning loss from missed days of school or transitions between schools.

**Recommendation** - Identify and implement early interventions to reduce the need for and/or success of educational strategies to reduce the number of students in non-credit bearing classes in postsecondary institutions.

**Recommendation** - Increase students' motivation in school by having them develop a career exploration plan in 9th grade that will expose them to a wide range of careers and the education needed to succeed in those careers.

## Identify, Win, and Implement More Federal Dollars to Support an Effective Education to Workforce System with Wraparound Services

**Recommendation** - Leverage the coordination and utilization of federal grants through the launch and staffing of the Governor's Office of Federal Resources as enacted in AB445. Put a representative from that office on the education to workforce subcabinet to help break down silos and integrate funding streams for the benefit of Nevadans.

**Recommendation** - Allow state agencies to submit federal applications as the main documentation for review by the Governor's Finance Office and the Legislature's IFC and eliminate other disincentives state agencies face in competing for federal grants.



# The Challenges...and the Opportunities

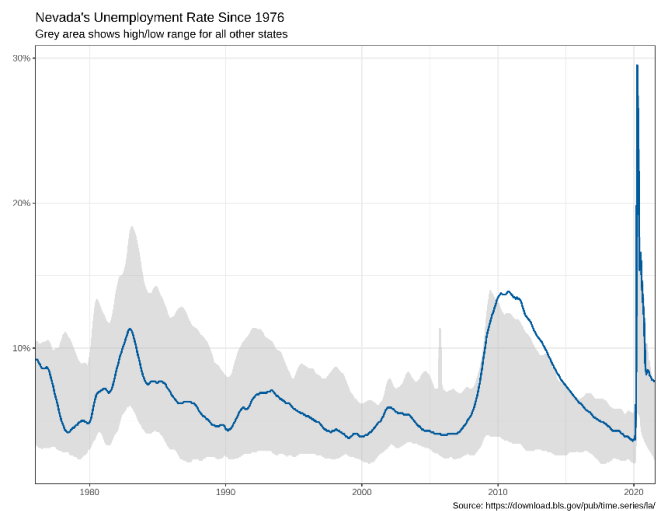
## Setting the Context

Nevada experienced the most significant economic impact from COVID of any state in the nation. At its worse, unemployment topped 30% in the Silver State. The impact was not equally distributed with the state's Latino and Black populations hit the hardest. State systems to meet the health, workforce, education, and social service needs were overwhelmed.

As the state makes strides towards recovery, it cannot, nor should not, return to pre-pandemic systems or approaches. Getting back to pre-COVID normal is not a prescription for making the kinds of strides the state needs.

This is a period in the state's long history as it comes out of the latest dramatic economic calamity to commit to new opportunities, new approaches, new systems, and a stronger future for the residents of the state. It is an opportunity, as Governor Sisolak has called, to build a stronger future for all Nevadans so that when the next economic or health crisis comes, which it will, its impact on all Nevadans will be significantly less.

Governor Sisolak has made education, the economy, and healthcare his priorities to improve the quality of life for all Nevadans. As stated on his website, he has made improving Nevada's education system his top priority. He is committed to strengthening and diversifying the state's economy, both in terms of bringing more good, high-paying jobs into the state and preparing the workforce with the skills and credentials to fill those jobs. And he believes that all Nevadans deserve high-quality, affordable health care. This is a strong foundation to move a state forward. It provides the Governor the opportunity to articulate an even stronger and more transparent aspiration for the state by setting key targets in education, workforce readiness, healthcare, social service supports, and other key elements that will dramatically enhance the trajectory of the state.

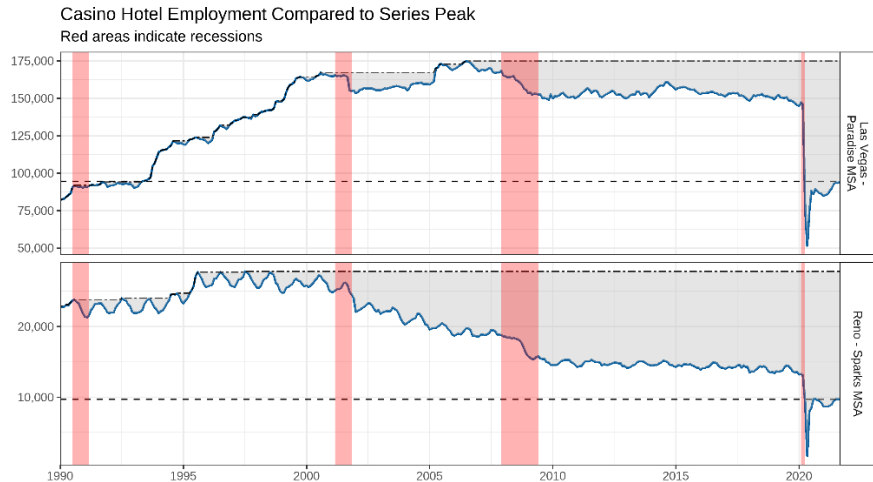


The data provides a clear picture of those most affected by the economic impact of COVID. Those hit hardest were those struggling before COVID and will continue to struggle after the pandemic subsides unless policies change. Knowing who the people are and what the hurdles are preventing them from entering or being successful in the workforce is the first step in strengthening the state's response. There are certain features of Nevada's economy and demographics that make the state exceptionally susceptible to dramatic impacts from economic downturns. As the **chart above** prepared by DETR shows, while Nevada traditionally has an unemployment rate in the middle of the pack of all states, it led all states in unemployment rates in the recent COVID downturn as well as the recession a dozen years ago. But the impact is not uniform and so the interventions and approaches to responding need to reflect that reality. Based on the unemployment reports, the populations hit hardest by the economic downturn from COVID were: single women with children; African American and Latina women; and young people between the ages of 16-24.



Because the differential impact was so large for certain populations, the State should build on its efforts to understand why these populations were hit so significantly and how they can be helped. It is no surprise that mothers bore the brunt of the economic impact from COVID as students stayed home and the cost of childcare continues to be an insurmountable barrier for far too many. Additionally, for women, especially women of color, that are over-represented in the hospitality and accommodations sector, experienced skyrocketing unemployment as this sector nearly completely shut down.

While the latest estimates from GOED show much of the state’s job numbers are back, roughly 50,000 jobs in the hospitality and accommodations sector have been lost (see chart on casino hotel employment).



## Defining the Pipeline to Being Unemployed, Underemployed, or Undereducated

Nevada faces a significant challenge in terms of a heightened demand for greater skills and credentials than are available in the workforce. The state faces a disconnect between the demands of employers and the education and skills of far too many that are unemployed, underemployed, or in jobs that can’t get them to the middle class. But the lack of education and needed workforce training and credentials are not the only challenge Nevadans face in entering and remaining in the workforce. The Department of Employment Training and Rehabilitation identified the largest pool of unemployed as single mothers with children. While some lack the required education, many lack affordable, high-quality childcare and other social services needed to give them the stability to step into a living wage job.

If the Governor’s goal is to create access to education and workforce training needed to ensure all Nevadans have access to the middle class and beyond, it will serve the state well to identify the impediments in the current system that prevents the most challenged individuals across the state from that success. Some of challenges the state should focus on include: those that have dropped out of high school (over 300,000 working age Nevadans don’t have a high school diploma); or those Nevadans that started but didn’t complete their postsecondary education (possibly earning debt but no degree); or those Nevadans that have spent time in the juvenile justice and/or corrections systems (research shows high recidivism for leavers with no new workforce skills). Addressing these current educational challenges will pay dividends for Nevadans and the state in the future. Individuals, families, and communities will be better positioned to weather the next economic downturn if the state tackles some of these toughest of hurdles.

But just having a better educated state may not be enough to significantly reduce the number of people living in, or near poverty, with limited access to the middle class and beyond. The authors of [Poorly Understood - What America Gets Wrong About Poverty](#) present a powerful analogy of musical chairs to help people understand the limitation of solely focusing on an education and job training strategy to put people on a path out of poverty towards the middle class and beyond. Like musical chairs were there might be 8 chairs for 10 players, we have too few good paying jobs for the number of people playing the game. That means if some people do get a valuable credential and degree, they might be better positioned to get the next good job. But if government were to work with the private sector to expand its efforts to create new jobs, including entry level jobs that pay well, we could change the game of economic musical chairs and create more jobs and fewer “losers.”

### Diversification of the State’s Economy - Paying Attention to the State’s Core Industries’ Workforce Needs While Meeting the Demands of Newer Employers

Nevada is a state built on gaming, hosting tourists from around the globe, and mining. While the tourism and gaming industries are shrinking (nearly 17% in a last decade) and mining is relatively small, they will continue to be crucial for the state’s future. But it is the broadening economic base which is demanding a more highly skilled and credentialed workforce (**see chart below**). Much of the fastest growth sectors require four-year degree or some postsecondary credential. So, while the state should be applauded for its diversification, it has not done enough to set a vision and articulate clear goals in terms of credential attainment.

Sector	2020 Jobs	2010 Jobs	Percent Change (2010 to 2020)	Avg. Earnings Per Worker
Tourism, Gaming, and Entertainment	318,298	383,246	-16.9%	\$41,154
Health/Medical Services	126,902	89,775	41.4%	\$74,360
Logistics & Operations	102,744	64,799	58.6%	\$73,017
Natural Resources	74,628	50,040	49.1%	\$90,699
Information Technology	72,572	49,034	48%	\$68,654
Manufacturing	58,049	39,633	46.5%	\$85,084
Aerospace & Defense	17,883	13,769	29.9%	\$113,684
Mining	14,939	12,343	21%	\$122,815

### The Need to Increase Credentials & Skills Aligned to a Transforming Economy

As the economy transforms, Nevada, like all other states, is in a race to educate its population to meet the needs of its employers. Unfortunately, [Nevada is last in the nation in terms of its working age population with a postsecondary credential at 42.5%](#)<sup>1</sup>. This number includes short-term certificates, industry-recognized credentials, and all degrees at the associate level

<sup>1</sup> [A Stronger Nation: Learning Beyond High School Builds American Talent, Lumina Foundation - Nevada Data](#)

and higher. When this data is disaggregated by race, there is even greater concern. Over the last ten years since the last census, Nevada was the 5<sup>th</sup> fastest growing state and has become the 3<sup>rd</sup> most diverse state. While positive by many metrics, this diversification should provide a significant signal that its policies must take this into account as the education levels by race vary dramatically in the state. In fact, Hispanic and Black populations saw the largest increases in numbers between 2010 and 2020 while they have some of the lowest percentages with an associate degree or higher at 16% and 26.4% respectively. Whereas Asian/Pacific Islanders and Whites have percentages with an associate degree or higher at 49.3% and 40.7% respectively. That means the demographics with the largest population growths in the state will not help the state meet its postsecondary credential attainment needs unless the state policies and interventions improve the education and workforce training of these demographics.

	2020 Population	Change in Population (2010 to 2020)	% W/AA Degree or Higher
Asian/Pacific Islander	272,000	+77,000	49.3%
Black	304,000	+86,000	26.4%
Hispanic	890,000	+174,000	16%
White	1,588,000	-198,000	40.7%

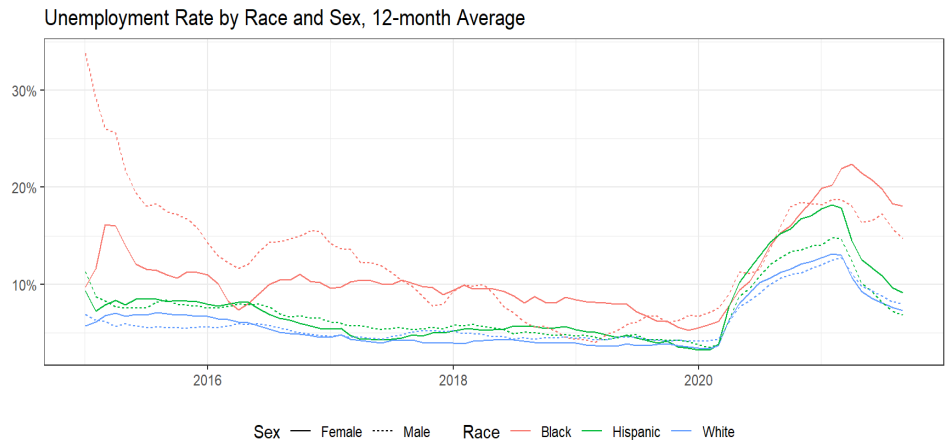
### Meeting the Social Service Needs of Nevadans to Strengthen the State’s Workforce – Employment Challenges are Not Only About Credentials & Skills

Research is becoming more and more clear that many people, especially during COVID, left the workforce for non-work-related issues, such as health and childcare. Large numbers of women left the workforce during COVID-19 when schools went virtual and childcare centers closed. While Nevada is making progress on improving the education and job training needed to upskill its workers, without also addressing their social service needs, far too many Nevadans will continue to be sidelined from the workforce.



## Disparate Impact Means Disparate Response

While every group (by race and gender) in the state saw significant increases in unemployment rates from pre-pandemic levels, black women experienced the largest increase by far (see **chart**). Pre-pandemic, black women had an unemployment rate of 5 percent which was similar to other demographic groups in the state. After one year of the pandemic, that rate increased to more than 20%.

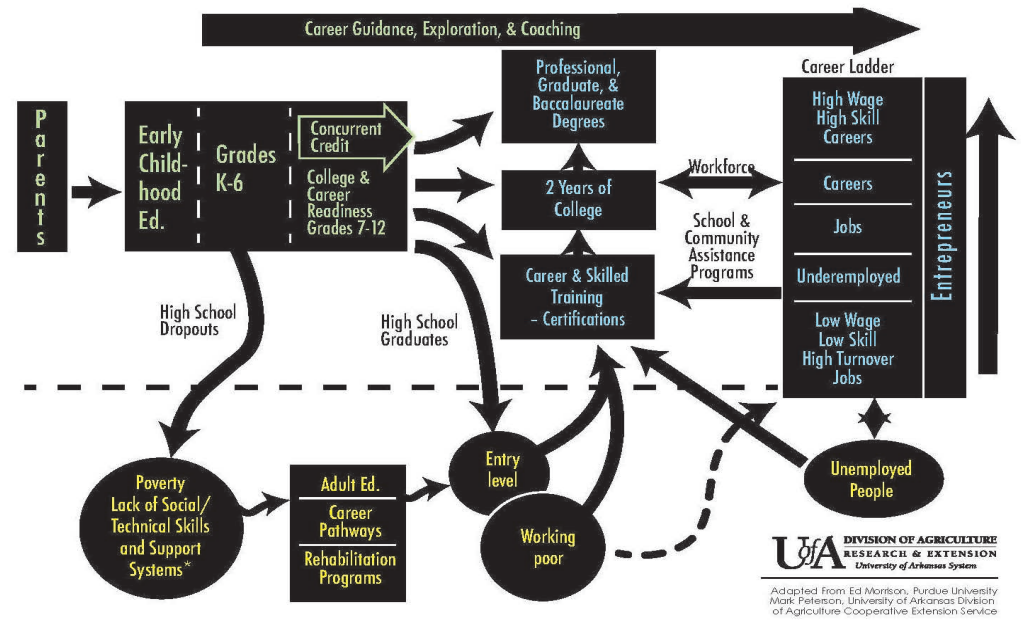


## Mapping the Education to Workforce System and Wraparound Services

The biggest mistake policymakers too often make in terms of understanding the education to workforce system is to think of it as linear, one directional, and compartmentalized. Much of the recent work in this country in building the education to workforce system has focused on improving the parts of the system (e.g., K-12, higher education, workforce training, employers) individually and without regard to the intersection of these important parts of a larger system. Also, too many policymakers fail to include the social service supports (e.g., childcare, healthcare, housing, mental health, food security) that too many of us take for granted that too often gets in the way of some people from entering, staying in, and succeeding in the workforce. Leaders can make progress when they start to view the education to workforce system as just that, a system, and not just disconnected pieces lined up in a row. But truly building a system that is desperately needed for economic success for far more Nevadans means wrapping the necessary social services around the core elements of education and employment.

Because the typical policymaker followed the traditional path through the education system and into the workforce and up the economic ladder, we too often are blinded to the twists and turns that people experience. Therefore, it is crucial for a state to develop a strong visual of the realities that people from all walks of life and all levels of the education and economic spectrum face as they enter the education system and then move into the workforce. It is this type of visual and vision that will enable Nevada to build upon its current efforts to create a system, not for today, but for the future, that will work for all Nevadans.

One of the better visuals was developed by Ed Morrison and Mark Peterson. The visual below captures the traditional flow the majority of young people go through as they enter the education system and work their way through K-12 and into some level of postsecondary education before entering the workforce. Equally powerful, the visual shows the typical destination for those that do not complete (i.e., poverty) or merely complete (i.e., entry level jobs) their K-12 education.



This visual also incorporates the important aspect of career guidance, exploration, and coaching. But even this visual could benefit by making more transparent some important aspects of the education to workforce system. To build on this picture, Nevada can add in its heavy emphasis on internships and apprenticeships to the career guidance, exploration, and coaching line. The state should incorporate the social service programs (e.g., childcare, healthcare, housing, food subsidies, mental health, juvenile justice) that can and should be coordinated with the education and workforce training service shown above to help programs see themselves as key aspects of getting people into and helping them succeed in the workforce. These would include the services offered by such state agencies as DETR, DHHS, NDE, Corrections, and others, as well as the local providers they fund and partner with throughout the state.

With this type of visual agreed to, the leaders of the parts of the system can further their current conversations about the strengths and weaknesses of each part of the system, the challenges at the key points of intersections of the parts, the gaps in the system, and the opportunities to make major improvements. Nevada has a tremendous number of strong efforts underway to help those out of work, underemployed or undereducated. But too many of these efforts are not connected to a larger system or operating at a scale to meet the needs across the state. Too many are still viewed as random acts of improvement.

Working backwards from an agreed upon vision, it is easier to start to understand the challenges Nevada's current workforce faces when it breaks down the data by various demographic groups and identifies the hurdles they confront in entering, remaining in, and succeeding in the workforce. For example, based on the unemployment data by demographic group presented earlier, women with children had some of the highest unemployment rates before and during the COVID downturn. While some of the challenges

those individuals faced are educational, the state must start to consider the impact of childcare, and its cost, as a major impediment for economic success for women with children. Recent reports and articles in Nevada and across the country have been ringing the alarm bell on the cost of high-quality childcare. [The Economic Policy Institute](#) identified Nevadans' average cost of day care for a 4-year-old at \$9,050 and \$11,408 for infant care, whereas the cost to go to college in Nevada is just under \$6,000. While the cost of high-quality childcare has been a significant burden before COVID, its negative impact on women and families was exacerbated by the impact of COVID on the public schools and childcare centers.

Working further back in this visual, it is important to understand the challenges within the parts of the system and at the key points of intersection between the parts of the system that multiply the challenges. For example, while 84% of Nevada's public-school students graduate from high school in the 2018-19 school year, nearly half (45.9% in 2018-19) of the students that went on to one of Nevada's 2- or 4-year postsecondary institutions enrolled in at least one remedial education class in reading, writing or mathematics.

Digging into Nevada's data even further, this visual would be helped by overlaying the skills and credentials needed by the current and future employers of the state. Nevada faces a significant challenge as its economy is shifting from one dominated by gaming, hospitality, accommodations, and mining to one that is diversifying into healthcare, IT, logistics, and manufacturing. The Lumina Foundation's finding that Nevada has the lowest percentage of adults with a postsecondary credential presents a challenge as employers scramble to find qualified individuals to fill emerging well-paid openings. But it also presents an opportunity for Nevada as it can use the data from GOED, DETR, the local Regional Development Authorities, and chambers of commerce to identify the skills and credentials (e.g., Industry Recognized Credentials (IRC), degrees of 2, 4, and more years) and the numbers of each to allocate resources to build high-quality education and training programs aligned to the emerging needs of employers. Done right, Nevada can be known as the Wayne Gretzky of the education to workforce system as it builds its system not for where the world is today, but for where the education and workforce needs will be in the future.

Another crucial example of how this visual that captures and coordinates the state and its local partners' efforts would be by elevating up the importance of the relevant social service programs and services. If the state were to integrate the social service programs as discussed above, there would be no more powerful message of that integration than if the Governor articulated that vision, shared goals and metrics to hold his agencies accountable for that vision, and developed budgets to support it. In terms of Nevadans in need, this vision would pay dividends if the state invested in a common electronic intake system to make it easier for individuals to benefit from the wealth of programs offered by the various agencies to support the education, workforce training, and social service needs to enable far more Nevadans to achieve economic success. For example, just imagine the potential impact if the state had a single unified intake/data/case management system that enabled Nevadans to walk into a One Stop office, a library, community center, community college, university, or other local provider and enter their documents and workforce and social service needs once and then have the system identify the various education and social service programs they are eligible for at that time. Then, the various agencies providing those services to that individual could coordinate services and provide follow up support to help that Nevadan as she or he makes significant progress towards economic success.

A final example of how this visual could be used to benefit Nevada's improvement of its education to workforce system with wraparound supports is by using it to coordinate programs, planning, data systems, funding, roles, and responsibilities of the relevant state agencies and local partners. Some of the roles and responsibilities are fairly straight forward, but too often, each agency believes it has to do what it does not see another agency doing that might be better situated to accomplish. For example, if there was a strong unified data system for planning and policy use, there would be stronger coordination between the data collected on what employers need and what credentials/degrees the postsecondary institutions and private providers offer as well as the size of each program. There would be a clear understanding that the significant shortfall in teachers throughout the state is weakening the learning opportunities for students which is producing weak results and wide racial and economic outcomes in student learning, postsecondary success, and workforce readiness. This type of analysis could continue to further identify strengths in the system to build upon as well as weaknesses that could be addressed in upcoming legislative sessions.

Lastly, states around the country that have identified the complexity of this type of system have taken two significant steps to work towards improving outcomes. The first is governors have established themselves as the education and workforce governor and they have set strong visions with clear and aggressive attainment goals in terms of Industry Recognized Credential (IRC) credentials and degrees to meet the needs of their states' employers. The second is governors have built capacity in their own office or connected office to coordinate and facilitate efforts across the relevant state agencies and local partners, and federal and state funding. Most of the leading governors used the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) requirement for a coordinating board (e.g., Governor's Workforce and Development Board or similar cross-agency and cross-sector structure) as their means to lead and ensure strong follow through for the priority they placed on economic success for their citizens, a stronger workforce and economic development efforts, and as the means to reinforce and hold accountable efforts across agencies to transform the state.



## Recommendations - Meeting the Challenges of Today and Tomorrow

Achieve a Bold Vision in Creating the Workforce and Economic Opportunities to Accelerate all Nevadans into the Middle Class and Beyond

### **Recommendation - Broadly articulate a strong state economic transformation and workforce readiness vision and establish aggressive, but reachable attainment goals, broken out by key demographics.**

States across the country that have made significant progress in supporting the transformation of their economy and workforce were led by governors that made it their top priority and loudly championed it across their agencies and through strong partnerships with the private sector (**see sidebar**). Their administrations broadly shared a strong vision for a diversifying economy and the workforce to meet employers' needs. They established clear goals in terms of credential and degree attainment needed to meet the current and projected needs of employers and put their residents on a path to the middle-class and beyond.

Governor Sisolak has clearly established workforce development and economic vitality as a priority for his administration. But he could strengthen his work by clearly branding his efforts with a statewide tagline, logo, and attainment goals and then hold the relevant state agencies and key state and local partners accountable for making strong progress towards that vision.

States that have a strong education to workforce system vision, but no measurable goals rarely follow through or hold themselves accountable for progress. It is the states and governors that combined vision with attainment goals and then aligned plans and budgets and held state government accountable for making progress against those goals that have had the most impact for their states.

**Recommendation - Set goals and strategies to benefit those historically most negatively impacted by economic downturns.** More recently, states are not just establishing general attainment goals, but are recognizing the disparate impact of their current systems on various racial demographics and genders and have begun to establish targeted goals and strategies to address those historic disparities. This need to address racial discrimination that has impacted education and workplace outcomes is no longer just a moral imperative. The data clearly shows that this country's workforce must diversify faster than its education system is preparing a more diverse workforce if it is to keep up with employers' needs. Failure to do this is leading employers to not being able to find a

#### State Vision Examples

Governors have used strong visions with clear attainment goals to spur economic growth and success of their workforce through strong partnerships with employers.

Strong examples include:

- Colorado is working to "Foster an Economy that Works for Everyone" through its [Talent Equity Agenda](#)
- Virginia is [Building a Workforce System that Works for Virginia](#)
- [Back to Work Rhode Island](#)
- [Future Ready Iowa](#) set as a goal 70% of Iowa's workforce with a degree or credential beyond HS by 2025 and report on it in [Metrics that Matter](#)
- [Talent Ready Utah](#) -
- Michigan's [Sixty by 30](#)



workforce as more and more middle skill jobs require some postsecondary education (credential or certificate) but less than a four-year degree. The National Skills Coalition [Roadmap for Racial Equity: An Imperative for Workforce Development Advocates](#) offers insights and recommendations for tackling the educational, workforce training, financial, broadband, and correctional hurdles confronting many people of color as they enter or attempt to move up in the workforce. **Governor Sisolak should task his administration with building an education and workforce agenda that offers disparate strategies to address historically disparate impacts.** Within this charge, the Governor can elevate the long-term commitment to this agenda by establishing strategies and metrics to reduce intergenerational poverty. [Utah's Intergenerational Poverty Initiative](#) is one of the most long running state initiatives to attempt to break the insidious cycle of poverty. This roughly decade long effort has brought together state leaders across agencies, along with local community partners to build plans and implement actions that are slowly moving the needle in the positive direction on indicators that measure intergenerational poverty. More recently, the states of [Washington](#), [Illinois](#), and others have enacted legislation, produced reports, and started to take action to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty.

**Recommendation - Build consistent momentum and buy-in around the vision and kick it off with a summit, or regional summits in the north and south. Strengthen the capacity to achieve a "One Vision - One Voice" message and share specific expectations around attainment goals, coordination, actions, resources, partnerships, and accountability.**

Building an education to workforce system with the necessary wraparound services requires massive coordination within state government and between the public and private sectors. This is not a type of effort that occurs after an executive order or a powerful speech, or a few meetings. But it does start with policies, budgets, and events that signals the start to changing the trajectory of a state. Governor Sisolak's recent efforts to solicit input from Nevadans on how best to spend federal COVID relief dollars within his articulated framework creates an opportunity to continue to elevate this moment to transform the state's education, workforce development, and social service supports. To bring this about, the type of coordination within government and between sectors requires a constant drumbeat from the Governor and reinforcing follow up efforts by his leadership team and partners to reinforce his message.

## [Strengthen the Collaboration of the Key State and Local Partners to Multiply the Impact of the Education to Workforce System and Wraparound Services](#)

**Recommendation - Strengthen the role and value of the Governor's Workforce Development Board** (GDWB) by appointing strong leaders from across the private and public sector to serve on it and use it to coordinate education and workforce policy. The Governor should signal this board's importance by making timely and significant appointments, aligning the WIOA state plan to his vision for workforce readiness, and by participating in at least half of the annual meetings. Because this entity is tasked by federal law to be the Governor's mechanism to shape significant federal workforce funding, elevating its membership and role in supporting the Governor in guiding the state's transformation is crucial in aligning resources and accountability with his vision.

**Recommendation - Invigorate a sub-cabinet focused on education, workforce, and wraparound services.** A major challenge with building a state system to strengthen a state's workforce to meet the needs of its employers while addressing equitable outcomes is that so many of the crucial pieces of that system sit within different state agencies, funded by separate federal and state sources, held accountable by metrics that reinforce separation of solutions rather than meeting the integrated needs of people, and delivered by a wide range of local partners. This diffused system typically encourages initiatives, programs, and public-private partnerships to develop around issues (i.e., education, workforce training, poverty alleviation, childcare, housing, transportation, criminal justice) rather than points of intersections that would respond to the complex integrated needs of people. Governor Sisolak recognized this challenge and, prior to COVID-19, proposed sub-cabinets of state agency leaders to work together to address his priorities to strengthen the state. Unfortunately, COVID response delayed the launch of that effort. Now that the state is emerging from the dramatic health and economic impact of COVID, the Governor can invigorate his sub-cabinet approach with its relaunch and strongly encourage cross-agency collaboration. As the Governor does relaunch his sub-cabinets, it will be important connect the work of education and workforce readiness, perhaps through one integrated sub-cabinet that is focused on the alignment of the state's education systems, integrated with the necessary wraparound social service, to prepare Nevadans for success in the emerging economy.

Additionally, recognizing that cross-agency work goes against the nature of how government typically operates, it will be important that staff capacity to facilitate this important cross fertilization is supported and held accountable to achieve the Governor's goal of stronger integrated government to put all of Nevada's families and its economy on a path towards success.

**Recommendation - Move the Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation back to the Governor's Office to ensure the Governor has the staff capacity to coordinate efforts around an improved education to workforce system with wraparound services.**

The Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation (GOWINN), created roughly five years ago through executive order and then formalized in law put Nevada on the list of leading states tackling the complexity of coordinating the education to workforce system. It increased efforts to coordinate within the state as well as pull in more federal workforce dollars into the state. While some issues appear to have encouraged the latest legislative move to relocate GOWINN within DETR, it is recommended that this entity be moved back to under the Governor's office to fulfill its legislatively defined role of cross-agency coordination by emphasizing key responsibilities around:

- facilitating the Governor's sub-cabinet on education and workforce with wraparound services and enhancing the collaboration of policy and programmatic efforts of the relevant state agencies and local partners
- staffing the Governor's Workforce and Development Board to ensure it serves the Governor's priorities, enhances the coordination of state policy, and improves the collaboration between the public and private sectors to support the state's economic transformation. GOWINN should also reinvigorate the state's Sector Councils to strengthen the voice of employers in key sectors to the Board and across state government

- strengthening the longitudinal policy/research data system (i.e., achieve the original aspiration of NPWR whether as NPWR 2.0 or a new system) that can be used to flag short-term policy, budgetary, and agency capacity concerns that need to be addressed, as well as long-term strategies to strengthen economic futures for all Nevadans and begin to break the insidious cycle of poverty
- Enhancing organizational relationships across state government to improve outcomes for all Nevadans
- Building relationship with national partners, alliances, and experts to benefit the state through identification of best practices and new funding opportunities

This shift back to the Governor’s office and emphasis on its original intent, will strengthen the Governor’s ability to improve the outcomes of state government for the benefit of all Nevadans. It will also strengthen DETR’s important roles throughout the workforce and social service system as the central agency responsible for major aspects of federal workforce funding.

**Recommendation - Map the education to workforce system and wraparound services to clarify roles, responsibilities, and clear lines of accountability to achieve better outcomes.**

It is difficult to manage what is not defined. Nevada, like other states have a significant number of efforts at the state and local level to improve education, workforce training, and social services that all, in some ways are helping individuals and communities enhance their skills and paths towards economic success. Unfortunately, because there is not enough clarity around roles, responsibilities, partnerships, funding, and accountability, these efforts have resulted in more of a blurred system rather than clarity for those in need. The state has started the process to identify resources through its asset mapping efforts which is a great start. But the Governor’s newly formed sub-cabinet or his Workforce Development Board should task a small, cross-agency and cross-sector team to map roles, responsibilities, programs, funding, and accountability metrics related to the education and workforce system, along with the wraparound services necessary to support the needs of all Nevadans. It is recommended to map this ecosystem so the roles, connections, and capacity of the various public and private sector partners can be viewed, assessed, and strengthened, if needed. The Governor’s vision and attainment goals, and the current asset map, should be the starting points to clarifying the current system and changes needed to build the system that would significantly benefit the state, its workforce, and its employers.

In addition, the education to workforce system with wraparound supports visual presented above should be adapted to Nevada’s vision and can be helpful as the cross-agency team tackles essential system question such as:

- Which agency(ies) are responsible for each part of the current education to workforce system, and wraparound services relevant to preparing all Nevadans for entry and success in the workforce?
- Which agency(ies) are responsible at the key points of intersection between the various parts of the system and how will those intersections be managed to ensure Nevadans don’t fall through the cracks?
- Based on the Governor’s vision and attainment goals, what policies, budgets, or programs need to be strengthened or are missing?
- What are the key indicators to track throughout the various parts of the system as well as at the key points of intersection?

It is questions like these, that when facilitated across agency, can build the necessary partnerships to ensure the state system works for all Nevadans.

Finally, visuals, sub-cabinets, data, and other means to encourage collaboration and better results are necessary, but not sufficient to bring about needed transformation in states. The Governor's time and attention to changing the culture and results of state government and its partners is crucial to bringing about new approaches, methods, partnerships, and results. Whether that means the Governor holds a monthly data meeting with his sub-cabinet focused on key questions, data, and results, or posting quarterly results for the public to see, the Governor's commitment and follow through to strengthening the state's education to workforce system with wraparound services is crucial to achieving far better results.

**Recommendation - Relaunch WIOA Sector Councils and ensure their voices are incorporated into the work of GWDB to ensure strong input from employers on how the public and private sectors can work together to strengthen job training and employment in the major emerging and mature sectors.** GOWINN has recently initiated steps to relaunch four Sector Councils (Healthcare; Information and Communication Technology; Logistics and Transportation; and Manufacturing). These four Sector Councils, representing key emerging sectors across the state will be invaluable in informing governmental, educational, and private sector partners in how best to support these growing sectors' workforce related needs. Getting these councils filled and working will be important to informing the work of the GWDB and its recommendations. Beyond having the councils, it will be important to build the work of the GWDB to focus on strategic issues (e.g., revision to the state plan that captures the education to workforce system with wraparound services; solving longitudinal and cross-agency data issues; aligning policies and resources with the transformation of the state's economy and the needs of its workforce).

**Recommendation - GOWINN, as quickly as capacity will permit, should launch a fifth Sector Council representing tourism, gaming, and accommodations. This Council should inform state agency, educational partners, and the private sector on how to help employees and employers in this sector support the transformation of the workforce to minimize dramatic swings in employment from economic downturns and ensure a wide variety of training opportunities are available for individuals whose jobs are transformed or phased out.** Sector councils should play an important role in informing state economic, educational, and social service policies to ensure a strong and vibrant workforce as the economy changes. This role is just as important in mature sectors that may be shrinking as in emerging sectors that are growing. The tourism, gaming, and accommodations sector represents the largest number of jobs in the state and only trails the total number of jobs in all four sectors of the newly formed councils by a mere 12%. And with nearly 40-50,000 jobs in this sector not returning after the COVID downturn, it would be invaluable to have employers, and education and state agency leaders work together to ensure those individuals that lost their jobs and need to skill up to make a livable wage have new opportunities as quickly as possible. Because the size of this sector in Nevada and its susceptibility to wide swings in employment during economic downturns, having clear lines of communication and strong plans to strengthen and adapt its workforce will be crucial to minimize the negative impact on employees, employers, as well as the state as it emerges from COVID and in the next economic downturn.

### **Recommendation - Reconsider separating the state's community colleges from NSHE.**

While there are clear ways to strengthen the community colleges efforts to align programs and capacity with the needs of the economy, breaking apart governance structures, funding streams, and accountability efforts is not in line with promising practices learned from other states. More states are looking for ways to achieve greater integration of systems to make them work more seamlessly as compared to creating a separate independent community college authority. The Aspen Institute's [The Workforce Playbook](#) provides community colleges an effective framework around developing a talent pipeline by articulating a strong workforce vision, aligning programs, supporting students before, during, and after the programs, and building strong partnerships with employers. This kind of effort will go further to making Nevada's community colleges a stronger engine to strengthen the workforce than changing their governance structure. Another recommendation that would go a long way to make Nevada's community colleges a stronger engine for economic success is to subsidize non-credit credentials of value in high-demand sectors. Virginia created the [New Economy Workforce Credential Grant Program](#) five years ago "to create and sustain a supply of credentialed workers to fill high-demand occupations in fields which support the state's economy while making the attainment of these credentials more affordable. This grant program provides a pay-for-performance model for funding noncredit workforce training that leads to a credential in a high demand field." This initiative attempts to overcome one of the major hurdles community colleges have in reaching their potential as credential engines for states. Nearly all states have had funding systems that reimbursed community colleges for degrees and not credentials. Virginia was able to pay for credentials of value by depending on employers to determine value and need.

### **Strengthen the Integrated Longitudinal Data System to Improve Outcomes**

There are few strategies more agreed upon yet so misused than data in education and workforce readiness efforts. States often mistake the amount of data collected or the number of websites sharing data as the strength of their data systems. Unfortunately, these states mistake discrete data elements for actionable information. This often results in essential conclusions getting lost amongst the sea of data required to be collected for accountability and other purposes. States that are leading the way in using data typically begin with three thoughts in mind: 1) who needs the data/information to take action; 2) what questions are they trying to answer to improve the quality, effectiveness, or efficacy of the education, workforce development, or related social service policies, programs, or services being offered; and 3) how can that data be visualized to make it understandable and actionable. It is through this process of identifying the key questions that state leaders can better visualize the challenges and their impacts in a way that can drive better policies or services. This will also enable those leaders to determine what data they already collect, what is missing, and what data needs to be connected.

Data can be the instigator of action and progress. But to be that type of engine, leaders need to see the data as answering important questions that resonate with their objectives. Having a data dashboard that visually conveys early wins, warnings, impediments to success, or disconnects from larger goals has the power to bring disparate leaders, policies, programs, and budgets together to address the confluence of issues that get in the way of people's success.

Nevada had high hopes for its use of data when the Nevada P-20 to Workforce Research Data System (NPWR) was created “to help guide and inform education and workforce policy by fostering data-driven decision-making.” Unfortunately, due to many challenges, especially around issues of privacy and participation, it has not met expectations. New efforts out of the Governor’s office and even current efforts to revive NPWR demonstrate an ongoing commitment to achieve NPWR’s original intent.

Other states (**see sidebar on Policy Dashboards**) and the federal government can offer guidance to help Nevada’s leaders achieve their data utilization vision. A recent [Training and Employment Notice \(TEN13-20\)](#) “promotes three key areas of guidance: (1) systemic collaboration of key workforce system partners to address customer needs and barriers to employment via integrated service delivery, (2) data sharing and enhanced data collection to support effective decision making around the operation of those services, and (3) leveraging resources across programs to support those integrated services.”

**Recommendation - Develop a state data dashboard/system that meets the needs of key leaders throughout the state to improve the policies, programs, and budgets related to education, workforce, and wraparound social services.**

A policy dashboard that could be the means to track essential indicators showing patterns across issues and agency responsibilities would be invaluable to Nevada. While parts of this type of indicator system would be helpful within major issue areas and their corresponding agency (e.g., education, health, economy) for leadership in those areas, it is the indicators and warning lights at the points of intersection of issues that are equally important and too often ignored. The main focus on systems like these that have been developed over the last decade or so have attempted to connect education and workforce data over time. These longitudinal data systems (LDS) help states make progress towards aligning education outcomes with projections of what is needed for success in the workforce. While this is important, states are only now starting to make data connections to policy areas that often knock people out of the workforce or limit their success. It is the states that are turning their attention to building education to workforce data systems that are integrating related social service issues and indicators that will be most powerful in helping to build systems and programs that best respond to the needs of all residents.

### Policy Dashboards

- [Kentucky Center for Statistics - Using our Data. Informing our Commonwealth](#) is an example of a strong state policy/data dashboard that focuses on longitudinal education to workforce data.

Examples of more inclusive data dashboards that cross issues relevant to meeting the education, workforce training, and social service needs of those in or enter the workforce include:

- [Maryland Quality of Life Dashboard](#) was developed “to empower social sector organizations to play a larger leadership role, working with business and government, to define and drive toward a better future.”
- [Texas2036](#) goal “is to envision a stronger future through data and research. Spur strategic action through planning, leadership and coalition-building.”
- [The Equity Indicators dashboard](#) helps cities understand and measure equality or equity in their city. It works across multiple areas (e.g., education, housing, justice) and measures the disparities faced by disadvantaged groups across those domains on a regular basis, tracking over time.”

## Strengthen the Delivery of Workforce Readiness Services Through the Expansion of In-Demand Credentials, Greater Integration of Essential Services, Utilization of Technology, Expansion of Co-Located Staff, and Enhancement of Training of Case Managers and Cross-Cutting Navigators

The vision for the workforce readiness system that Nevada should be striving to create is one that prepares and supports all Nevadans for long-term economic success for themselves and their family. This vision must include high-quality education and workforce training aligned to high-wage, in-demand jobs as well as the social services supports necessary to prevent Nevadans from being derailed from that dream. That means workforce readiness, while built around education and training aligned to employers demands, often requires wraparound services to provide the social supports (e.g., childcare, healthcare, transportation, housing, broadband) that individuals and families need to be successful in the workplace. While Nevada has efforts to integrate these types of services in pilot projects, the system, and those it is aimed to help, would greatly benefit from a data/case management system that career navigators and case managers of specific programs could use to ensure individuals they are helping take full advantage of all the governmental services offered. This approach would go a long way towards strengthening the current efforts in Nevada's WIOA One Stops, libraries, and other locations that are supporting state agencies' staff to "co-locate" and connect services to be more responsive to the needs of their clients.

### **Recommendation - Align and incentivize educational paths, credentials, and degrees with the needs of employers and provide the wraparound supports needed for success.**

Data being produced by GOED and DETR and being analyzed by NDE and NSHE is providing a much clearer picture of the credentials of today's workforce versus the staffing needs of employers today and in the near future. It is this gap analysis that should be driving changes in NDE and local school districts' Career and Technical Education program as well as at NSHE and its local campuses' efforts to produce in-demand industry recognized credentials and degrees. The state can build on the work done in 2019 under the New Skills for Youth grant from JP Morgan which produced an initial report showing the alignment and disconnects in the education to workforce pathways (Nevada Education Pathways to Employment report produced by WestEd). NSHE's current systemwide strategic planning efforts is incorporating workforce development as a crucial component of the system and its campus work ahead. By tying together important data on the credentials and degrees held by today's workforce versus what is needed in the future, the campuses will be able to partner with employers and respond more quickly to those needs.

Examples from other states ([West Virginia](#), [South Carolina](#) and its [Workforce Scholarships for the Future](#)) and research institutes provide a wealth of resources around employer engagement and transformations of community colleges. The Aspen Institutes [Aligning Talent and Opportunity: An Employer Guide to Effective Community College Partnership](#) provides a list of effective practices for this type of important partnership while its article on [What the Best Community Colleges Understand](#) offers insights and examples of how these institutions are stepping up. The Corporation for a Skilled Workforce's report [Developing Market-Relevant Curricula and Credentials: Employer Engagement for Community Colleges in Partnerships](#) offers guidance and examples to support strong collaborations. Finally, the [U.S.](#)

[Chamber of Commerce Foundation Talent Pipeline Management Initiative](#) provides training and materials to support employers and states to overcome skills gap challenges and help “build scalable, sustainable pipelines of talent.”

Finally, Nevada must address the full range of services needed by low-income individuals to help them succeed in job training and securing a job. While a few years old, the National Conference of State Legislatures report [Career Pathway Programs: Helping Low-Income People Increase Skills and Access Good-Paying Jobs](#) provides an overview of nine promising career pathway programs for low-income individuals studied in the [Pathways for Advancing Careers and Education \(PACE\) evaluation](#). This evaluation reviewed “career pathways programs, featuring nine of the country’s innovative programs operated by community colleges, community-based organizations, and workforce agencies in 18 sites across 12 states. The key components of a career pathways program included in this study were:

- Series of clearly defined and connected levels of education that build upon one other and lead to successively higher credentials and employment opportunities in growing occupations geared to jobs requiring some training and education, but less than a four-year degree.
- Multiple entry and exit points.
- Comprehensive and intensive interventions to address the learning and life challenges facing adults.
- Strong connections to the local labor market and employer needs.”

**Recommendation - Build a transparent system to expand the number and track Industry recognized credentials of value.** Nevada [has the lowest percentage of adults with a postsecondary degree or credential of value](#). While that has not been a major issue in the past because of its economy, it becomes an issue during every economic downturn. It will also become a more significant issue as the economy diversifies beyond its heavy dependence on hospitality, gaming, accommodations, and mining. Based on GOED projects, the state would benefit from a strong commitment to the industry recognized credentials of value that match the needs of employers. One way to jump start that work is to engage with the [Credential Engine](#) which was created “to map the credential landscape with clear and consistent information, fueling the creation of resources that empower people to find the pathways that are best for them.” CE’s effort to identify credentials of value enable states to work with employers and postsecondary institutions and private providers to develop a coherent system to rapidly expand the skills and credentials of a workforce in line with the needs of employers. Nevada could learn from [Indiana’s work with CE to accelerate the development of its healthcare workforce](#). In addition to the tracking of industry recognized credentials of value, NSHE’s current effort to inventory the state’s community colleges’ programs aligned to high-demand jobs will be an important building block to right sizing credentialing programs with the demand of employers.





## **Recommendation - Strengthen the state’s WIOA One Stop system through greater integration of services and utilization of technology.**

The expansion of a more robust support system for unemployed, underemployed, and/or undereducated Nevadans would accelerate with the development of an integrated virtual one-stop and case-management data system. This would include a common intake form/system to enhance the traditional workforce development system with the integration of social services, health services, childcare, and other programs to help individuals meet the challenges they face in entering and succeeding in the workforce (**see sidebar examples**). A recent federal guidance letter, [Training and Employment Guidance Letter \[TEGL\] 7-20](#), issued November 2020 “stressed the value of increasing service integration to further enhance services to the Title I Adult program’s priority populations...the letter emphasizes the value for the Adult program in collaborating with some required One-Stop partners...including Title I Youth program, TANF, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Adult Education and Family Literacy Act programs, the Vocational Rehabilitation programs, Community Service Block Grant programs, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Continuum of Care program, to work as one workforce system...”

Having a more integrated vision or framework for the State’s system would respond to the needs of Nevadans struggling the most. Imagine a situation in which an unemployed mother of two young children walks into a One Stop office in Las Vegas and walks out with a list of services she is eligible for, from job training to child-care and transportation subsidies. Better yet, envision a common intake/case management system that enables that mother to complete the application process all at the same time she is completing her job training application at the One Stop. And even better still, imagine if the system allowed a case manager and/or a career navigator assigned to that mother to follow up with her to make sure she was able to take advantage of all the

### **Virtual Integrated One Stop Services**

- [Research Improving People's Lives \(RIPL\)](#) uses “data, science, and technology to impact policy and improve lives.” Nevada could benefit from learning from RIPL’s latest project with the State of Hawaii to create a digital hub, the Hawaii Career Accelerator Navigator (HI-CAN), that will “seamlessly connect UI claimants and job seekers to high impact career pathways; Surface proven training programs; and refer individuals and their families to the wraparound social services they may need to assist to successfully land their new career.” **RIPL has been funded by several foundations to subsidize the cost of this work with states.**
- [Virginia Career Works Referral Portal](#) “quickly and easily connects individuals across the Commonwealth of Virginia to critical training, career, and support resources during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.” This [information video](#) provides a quick overview of the portal
- [AlabamaWorks](#) is “improving the statewide level of education beyond high school to help Alabamians achieve the education needed for present and future workplace success. In addition, the Atlanta Fed has partnered with Alabama to create [DAVID, the Dashboard for Alabamians to Visualize Income Determinations](#), a system designed to help people navigate the loss of public assistance as they move along a career pathway.”
- Existing efforts in Nevada should be explored for their potential to benefit a more integrated system. These include DHHS’ 211 system, work with the Center for Applied Management and Practices’ eLogic Genesis software, and other pilots.

state and federal programs, from workforce training to the needed wraparound services, that would put her and her children on the path to the middle class and beyond.

In addition to having a robust online integrated intake/case management system to make One Stop and other service provider employees more effective, that virtual system would be a significant benefit to the rural parts of the state that may have less access to a brick and mortar One Stop office. Finally, in this effort to bring integration and coherence to service delivery and other resources, this virtual One Stop concept would be a powerful means of improving service and engagement with employers. With too many websites and no clear hub or frame of reference for workforce services aimed at employers, the current system presents too many challenges which makes employers less likely to engage or benefit from a coherent education to workforce system. The virtual One Stop concept could be the opportunity for the state to streamline and better coordinate the large number of websites and online resources available to Nevadans, workers, and employers, as they search for education, workforce training, social service supports, or new employees. The list of **Relevant Education and Workforce Sites in the Appendix**, from [EmployNV](#) to [Nevada 211](#) to [Nevada JobConnect](#), identifies over 30 sites, and it is not an exhaustive list. But for any Nevadan in search of assistance, they may quickly become exhausted and discouraged by the myriad of assistance that lacks coherence and guidance.

Resources that can be of use to Nevadans as they transform their education to workforce system with wraparound services include: the [Pathways to Work Evidence Clearinghouse](#) which is “a comprehensive, transparent, and systematic assessment of the effectiveness of interventions designed to help job seekers with low incomes succeed in the labor market”; and the [Clearinghouse for Labor Evaluation and Research](#) whose “mission is to make research on labor topics more accessible to practitioners, policymakers, researchers, and the public more broadly so that it can inform their decisions about labor policies and programs.”

**Recommendation - Help more workers get back to work through incentives and childcare subsidies. Also strengthen the childcare workforce by increased training, wage subsidies, and refundable tax credits.**

As employers continue to struggle to find workers to fill jobs, it is important to encourage and support workers to get back in the workforce. Two types of programs that states used during COVID to help the unemployed reenter the workforce have included incentives to get back to work and childcare subsidies. One an incentive and one an elimination of a major hurdle, especially for working mothers, has seen some success in bringing the workforce back. The lessons from these efforts could be adapted to Nevada to focus on specific sectors or demographics.

Examples of monetary incentives to go back to work include [Colorado’s Jumpstart Incentive](#) program and [Vermont’s Returnship Program](#) which connects employers with workers who are looking for new opportunities. The Vermont model could be very valuable to learn from as a significant number of jobs in the Nevada hospitality and accommodation sectors disappear. These incentives ease the path for workers changing fields.

Recognizing the massive economic impact from COVID on mothers and families due to health issues and changing school and childcare opportunities, states are stepping up to be creative on helping them. Michigan created the [MI Tri-Share Child Care Pilot Program](#) to increase access to high-quality, affordable childcare for working families. Through this program, the cost of childcare is shared equally by an eligible employee, their employer, and the State of Michigan. The Oklahoma Department of Human Services, similar to Nevada's DHHS, took the tack well before COVID that it could assist Oklahomans in finding high-quality childcare and created the [Oklahoma Child Care Locator](#). In both cases, integrating this type of service into the One Stop and other workforce related support organizations will be important to bring far more women back into the workforce.

But while Nevada and other states have made efforts to connect mothers and families with childcare opportunities, the reality is there are not enough reasonable cost, high-quality childcare spots available for working parents. A main reason for this is that childcare wages are typically too low to retain a highly qualified workforce. Nevada desperately needs to find ways to make high-quality childcare affordable and provide childcare workers with a livable wage. It is not sustainable to have childcare cost more than a college education and expect low-income Nevada families to be able to use it and reenter the workforce. One way the state could achieve this goal is having GOED explore the use of its Emerging Small Business program or propose offering for-profit day care providers with a refundable tax credit, or other opportunities to strengthen the training and increase the wages of an expanded childcare workforce and increase the number of high-quality childcare centers. This effort would have the immediate impact of putting people to work in good paying jobs, if these positions could be subsidized, and creating spots in high-quality childcare centers so mothers and fathers that need childcare to go back to work can do so.

**Recommendation - Strengthen the state's WIOA One Stop system through expansion of co-located staff and enhancement of training for case managers and cross-cutting navigators.**

Technology and state services are only as good as how well they are used. Nevada has begun the process to co-locate and co-train staff from relevant workforce and wraparound service agencies to better support the needs of the unemployed, underemployed, and undereducated. Those efforts should be applauded and expanded. Nevada's federally funded initiative Supporting and Advancing Nevada's Dislocated Individuals (Project SANDI) will go a long way towards helping Nevada expand the training and technological supports dislocated and underemployed Nevadans need not just to get back on track to the workforce, but have the stepping stones to enhance their economic success. Expanding the number of and quality of training for cross-agency/program "Navigators" and other staff is essential to ensuring undereducated and underemployed Nevadans are well-aware of and take full advantage of government services that will get them into and keep them in the workforce on a path to the middle-class and beyond.



## Tackle Long-Term Educational Issues that Can Minimize Future Economic Challenges for Low-Income Nevadans

A state government's response to the hardships experienced by that state's residents typically focus on the immediate needs, whether a job, food, housing, childcare, or education and job training. All very important in the moment. But few states ever step back and ask the question or act on the answer to the question of why the number of people that need additional training and a stronger safety net never seems to go down. The answer must start at more education to prepare more people for success in the workforce. But the longer answer can also include investing in key jobs that serve as a path to the middle class or benefit future workers.

The research is clear on the pipeline to poverty and impediments to economic success:

- growing up in poverty often leads to further poverty, thus the cyclical nature of poverty
- a weak education system with few bridges or guard rails between education systems, and even fewer safety nets to prevent people from dropping out of school, whether literally or figuratively
- contact with the juvenile justice or criminal justice system
- not enough entry level jobs that have a pathway up to the middle class and beyond.

Because of how schools are funded, and typically staffed, in Nevada and across the country, children growing up in poor neighborhoods often experience challenging schools that are understaffed or staffed with less than highly qualified teachers or long-term substitutes. For example, the local news at the start of the 2021-22 school year highlighted Clark County School District's 750 teacher vacancies and urgent need for substitute teachers. The challenge across the state is also evident from the state's report card which shows that 20.1%, 16.9%, and 18.1% of math, science, and elementary classrooms were not taught by a highly qualified teacher in the 2017-18 school year. The shortage of highly qualified teachers has been a growing issue across the country before COVID and was exacerbated throughout COVID as far too much was asked of an already stretched thin teaching force.

Several other statewide leading and lagging indicators highlight the current and future challenges within the Nevada education system that will show up in future workforce readiness measures. Leading indicators can be used as early warning signs that learning may not be occurring at the level needed for later success. Lagging indicators take more time to show and focus on longer-term outcomes.

### Concerning Nevada Leading Indicators:

- 18.8% of all students were **chronically absent** (missing more than 10% of the school year) during the 2018-19 school year, with Black students topping out at 31.1%, American Indian/Alaskan Native at 24.5%, and Hispanic students at 19.4%, with all of these percentage increasing more than 50% during COVID. Research reinforces the notion that students must show up or engage virtually to learn.

- 21.5% of all students in the 2018-19 school year **did not attend the same school for the entire year**. If students are not receiving a consistent education, it is near impossible for them to stay on track with their learning progression and for a teacher to consistently support their success.
- An average of 12% of all ninth graders over the three school years prior to COVID did not have enough **credits to be classified as sophomores** by the end of their freshman year. [Research shows a strong correlation between ninth grade credit deficiency and a failure to graduate.](#)
- 12,000 students in 489 classrooms, on average, were left without **a full-time teacher** on their first day of school across the Clark County School District as cited by the Superintendent’s Teacher Recruitment and Retention Commission. Research has identified teacher quality as the leading in-school factor in terms of a student’s learning.
- A final leading indicator that can have long-term impact is the percentage of young Nevadans that have **access to high-quality early education**. Early research by Nobel Prize-winning economist James Heckman and others have shown the strong positive impact on educational and workforce outcomes from effective preschool. And [Heckman’s latest research shows the strong benefits to the children of those individuals in his earlier study that received high-quality preschool.](#) The evidence on the direct benefit, and now the evidence on the benefit for multi-generations makes this strategy important for breaking the cycle of poverty and improving educational and economic outcomes for those living in poverty.

#### Concerning Nevada Lagging Indicators:

- Only 37.5% and 48.5%<sup>2</sup> of all elementary and middle school students tested on the state exam scored **proficient in math and English language arts (ELA)**, respectively, in the 2018-19 school year. To make the challenge even more stark, 34.2% and 27.2% of all elementary and middle school students scored in the range that they would need “substantial improvement to demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed for likely success in future coursework” in math and ELA, respectively.
- 84% **graduation rate** in 2018-19 means more than one in every six students didn’t even complete high school and only 48.2% that did, **enrolled in a 2- or 4-year college**.
- 45.6% of the students that completed high school and went on to postsecondary education in Nevada, on average over the three years prior to COVID, **enrolled in a remedial reading, writing, or mathematics class**. Research shows that students taking remedial education in postsecondary institutions do not have strong track records of completing the degree and are more likely to earn debt than a degree.

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<sup>2</sup> One concern that is worth investigating is the “cut” score, or definition of proficient on the state exam in ELA. When comparing the results on the state exam versus the results on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP, considered by most educators as the gold standard of assessment) there is a significantly lower percentage of Nevadan elementary and middle school students that scored proficient on NAEP. This difference should be investigated to understand the reason and ensure Nevada’s definition of proficiency is preparing students for future success.

**Recommendation - Accelerate and expand the work of the [NSHE and NDE Teacher Pipeline Task Force](#), the [CCSD Superintendent’s Teacher Recruitment and Retention Commission](#), and other school districts’ efforts to prepare several thousand highly qualified teachers, especially teachers of color.** Nevada should be applauded for allocating nearly \$21 million of its federal relief dollars to its new [Incentivizing Pathways to Teaching](#) initiative. Building on this commitment will be important to address the teacher shortage that the state is experiencing. Promising practices identified in a recent [Learning Policy Institute Report, \*Diversifying the Teaching Profession\*](#), to further the state’s work includes: offering “service scholarships and loan forgiveness programs” for future teachers of color; building on the partnership between the school district and local universities to create teacher residencies, “grow your own” programs, mentorships, accelerate hiring time-lines to earlier in the school year, and most importantly, developing a strong development and retention program to strengthen and support new teachers. In addition, this work must also include a focus on recruiting, supporting, and retaining high-quality principals. Research supported by [The Wallace Foundation](#) found that low-performing schools do not turn around without strong leadership and effective principals are the means to attract and retain good teachers. Teacher surveys have reinforced this point in exit interviews where they identify poor leadership and bad conditions as the top reasons for leaving a school or the profession.

**Recommendation - GOED and DETR should utilize their resources and expertise to support the expansion and speed of NDE’s and NSHE’s educator preparation pipeline initiative.** To dramatically expand and accelerate this urgent work of preparing high-quality teachers and principals, GOED and DETR should find ways to support NSHE and NDE expand the use of incentive funds, subsidies, and other strategies they can use to spur this short- and long-term strategy to improve workforce readiness and success. If the state can dramatically expand the pipeline of high-quality educators, school districts would benefit by having the workforce they need, and today’s students and tomorrow’s workforce would benefit significantly from that infusion of talent.

**Recommendation - Build on the lessons Nevada educators and school districts learned from virtual learning during COVID to enhance the online options that students can use to reduce the amount of learning loss from missed days of school or transitions between schools.** This is a moment in time for school districts across the state to revisit what the new normal should be in terms of the delivery of high-quality education based on the needs of the students across Nevada. NDE should establish a task force on virtual learning that engages local education leaders, educators, and national experts to envision what strategies should complement the existing in-person learning to meet the needs of the state’s students beyond the end of COVID. We know going back to a pre-COVID education system will not work for far too many students. The task force should explore the potential and value of using online learning as a complement to in-person learning to increase students’ learning time, access to high-quality teaching, and the reduction in learning loss during the summer months, school transitions, and health-related shutdowns.

**Recommendation - Identify and implement early interventions to reduce the need for and/or success of educational strategies to reduce the number of students in non-credit bearing classes in postsecondary institutions.** Several national programs are showing evidence in helping students, especially students of color successfully transition from high school into postsecondary credit bearing classes. WestEd has two programs, the [Carnegie](#)

[Math Pathways](#) and [Reading Apprenticeship](#) that have research showing strong positive impact on student learning, including for students of color, and offering such programs at scale. Nevada can learn from [Rhode Island's](#) effort to support high school students in Providence to successfully complete the math to put them on a path for success in postsecondary learning.

**Recommendation - Build on the state's track record of apprenticeships to expand apprenticeship opportunities in the trades AND work-based learning opportunities in the State's emerging sectors.**

Over the last half decade or so, Nevada has dramatically increased its use of apprenticeships as a key workforce strategy. The state has successfully attracted federal dollars and started new programs that have been built on innovative partnerships with union leadership, employers, [postsecondary institutions and their alliances](#), and the [State Apprenticeship Council](#). The new \$4 million federal grant (Accelerating Nevada Apprenticeships for All) will be a strong boost to current efforts. With the move of the Nevada State Apprenticeship Council back to the Office of the Labor Commissioner, it will be an important opportunity for the state to take stock of existing apprenticeships, maximize their use, and invest in new ones in high-demand fields to accelerate the preparation of a needed well-trained workforce. With the [Biden administration's heightened focus and support of apprenticeships](#), Nevada is well positioned to continue to receive federal grants to support this work. Also, recognizing the state's need to expand training opportunities for communities of color and women, apprenticeships can be a strong path to accomplish this goal (e.g., [PowerUp Project](#), [Nontraditional Employment for Women](#)). Governing Magazine's article, [States Expand Apprenticeship Programs as Worker Shortages Grow](#) offers an excellent overview of apprenticeships and some examples of how states are using this strategy to put people in good paying changes through innovative training paths.

**Recommendation - Increase students' motivation in school by having them develop a career exploration plan in 9<sup>th</sup> grade that will expose them to a wide range of careers and the education needed to succeed in those careers.**

Leadership at NDE and the local districts have been working to change the culture and expectations for students. This has included the important addition of the option and incentive for College and Career Ready Diplomas Nevada's education leaders recognize that a high school diploma is seldom enough to put young people on a path towards economic success. Current efforts to align Career and Technical Education programs in the high schools with credential programs in the postsecondary system and in demand by employers are crucial. Leading states are increasing the resources and opportunities for students to raise their awareness of careers and the educational paths needed for success ([Virginia's Academic and Career Plan](#), [Ohio's Career Connections Framework](#); [Illinois' High School 2 Career](#); [Oklahoma's Individual Career Academic Plan](#); and [Rhode Island's PrepareRI Work-Based Learning Navigator](#)). New requirements for students to develop career awareness/engagement plans in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade are helping more students to understand the courses, career exploration, and work-based learning, internship, and dual credit opportunities they need to take advantage of in high school to set themselves up for success for a postsecondary credential or degree that will get them a good paying job and career. These plans can go a long way towards motivating students to do well in school and complete a postsecondary credential or degree. In addition to this valuable new requirement, it would benefit the state to inventory all the student facing career awareness

websites available to them and leverage the wealth of information and expertise each offers. Individually, most are interesting and bring some value. But none are game changing or constantly being updated. If there was more coordination in this space, resources could be leveraged to take this type of resource to the next level to get students' attention and interest in a world of high-tech, high-graphic video games and social media.

## Identify, Win, and Implement More Federal Dollars to Support an Effective Education to Workforce System with Wraparound Services

Nevada, for far too long has ranked near the top in terms of needs that would make it eligible for federal funds for a wide range of education, workforce, and social service programs. Unfortunately, it has ranked near the bottom in terms of receipt of federal programs. In response to this situation, AB445 was signed into law last year which will establish the Governor's Office of Federal Resources to help identify and secure far more federal dollars for the state. While this extra capacity can help, the state still has significant hurdles when it comes to changing the incentives to encourage state agencies to apply for federal funds. The current approval process, through the Governor's Finance Office and the Legislature's Interim Finance Committee (IFC), creates disincentives, extra work, and long delays in securing and putting federal funds to work for the state.

### **Recommendation - Leverage the coordination and utilization of federal grants through the launch and staffing of the Governor's Office of Federal Resources as enacted in AB445. Put a representative from that office on the education to workforce sub-cabinet to break down funding silos and integrate funding streams for the benefit of Nevadans.**

The new office should utilize and build upon the state's asset map to strengthen the coordination of existing federal education and workforce grants and expand the integration and implementation of relevant grants. This office should engage the Governor's Washington D.C. representative to work closely with the National Governors Association and federal agencies to identify new grant opportunities and solicit best practices from other states. Equally important to securing additional federal grants for the benefit of the state is the state's ability to utilize the funds more quickly. This would be significantly improved if the state could streamline its process to accept and spend grants from outside of Nevada so that awarded grants and the corresponding work funded can have a quicker start to provide the full length of the grant to impact the state. Recommendations in the 2018 annual report of the State of Nevada Grants Council offers strong recommendations to achieve this goal.

### **Recommendation - Allow state agencies to submit federal applications as the main documentation for review by the Governor's Finance Office and the Legislature's IFC and eliminate other disincentives state agencies face in competing for federal grants.**

This would allow an agency to lessen the burden to receive provisional approval in advance of the grant award and give the Finance Office and IFC the opportunity to request minor changes to the grant scope of work prior to its final award. This would be a significant step towards increasing agency incentives to go after more federal funds without lessening oversight. Changes in statute should be explored, as needed, to improve the efficiency and incentives for state agencies to secure and put to the state's benefit far more federal grants.



## Conclusion - Piecing Together the System to Achieve a Prosperous Future for All Nevadans

Nevada is a state in transformation from its demographics to its economy. But what does not waver from all the interviews conducted for this report is the commitment from state and local leaders to work together to support the State in its transformation. It is this commitment from throughout the state government and its agencies, to local partners, and leaders in the private sector that will accelerate Nevada on its path towards prosperity.

The recommendations in this report build on the good work that has been underway throughout Nevada and offers new ideas based on best practices and evidence from across the country. This moment in time demands better results for the state's families, workforce, and its employers. To achieve significantly better results, there must be greater coordination and collaboration around the ideas that work, whether already in state or adapted from other states. Finally, good ideas and evidence of what works does not always carry the day. Strong skills around leading change and the capacity to bring about the desired change is just as important as the ideas being implemented. The State has the leadership to accomplish great things for all Nevadans and this report should provide them with the data, best practices, and motivation to achieve a prosperous future for all Nevadans.



## Funding and Knowledge Resources

[Cognizant Foundation](#) - "We inspire, educate and prepare people of all ages to succeed in the workforce of today and tomorrow."

[Lumina Foundation](#) - "Imagine learning that's accessible, lifelong, and prepares everyone for a global future. To realize this vision, Lumina Foundation works to ensure 60 percent of adults will have a college degree, certificate, industry certification, or other credential of value by 2025."

[National Fund for Workforce Solutions](#) - "We envision an equitable future where workers, employers, and communities are thriving and prosperous. We collaborate with workers, employers, and communities to advance a skilled workforce, promote good jobs, and invest in equitable outcomes. The regional collaboratives in our national network bring together diverse local and regional partners to help workers access good jobs, businesses find the talent they need, and communities generate prosperity for all."

[Skillful: A Markle Initiative](#) - "Skillful has developed resources, partnerships and initiatives to help the nearly 70% of people in America without college degrees get good jobs based on the skills they have or the skills they can learn - creating new opportunities for success in the digital era." This initiative is funded by [Markle](#).

[Strada Education Network](#) - "Our vision is to see all individuals empowered to pursue learning pathways that are valuable, purposeful, and provide support to overcome systemic barriers to success."



# Appendix

## Entities Relevant to the Education and Workforce System & Wraparound Services

**Commission on Postsecondary Education** “is the predominant licensing authority charged by the Nevada Legislature for the oversight of private postsecondary educational institutions operating in Nevada.”

**Department of Business and Industry** “objective is to encourage and promote the development and growth of business and to ensure the legal operation of business in order to protect consumers by maintaining a fair and competitive regulatory environment.”

### **Department of Corrections** -

**Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation (DETR)** “is Nevada’s lead workforce development agency offering workforce development and related assistance, job placement and training, services for people with disabilities, investigation of claims of discrimination, and more.”

**Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)** “promotes the health and well-being of its residents through the delivery or facilitation of a multitude of essential services to ensure families are strengthened, public health is protected, and individuals achieve their highest level of self-sufficiency.” One of the five divisions of DHHS is the **Division of Welfare and Supportive Services**. Its “mission is to engage clients, staff, and the community to provide public assistance benefits to all who qualify and reasonable support for children with absentee parents to help Nevadans achieve safe, stable, and healthy lives.” Another of DHHS’s division is the **Division of Health Care Financing and Policy Overview**. It works in partnership with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to assist in providing quality medical care for eligible individuals and families with low incomes and limited resources.”

**Governor’s Office of Economic Development (GOED)** was created in 2011 “to help create a vibrant, innovative, and sustainable economy with high-paying jobs for Nevadans. Its objectives are to: establish a cohesive economic development operating system; increase opportunity through education and workforce development; catalyze innovation in core and emerging industries; advance targeted sectors and opportunities in the region; and expand global engagement. GOED contracts with Regional Development Authorities (RDA) to provide services to aid, promote, and encourage economic development of Nevada.”

**Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation (GOWINN)** “helps drive a skilled, diverse, and aligned workforce in the state of Nevada by promoting cooperation and collaboration among all entities focused on workforce development.” Its goals are to: “prepare all K-12 students for college & career success; increase Nevadans with postsecondary degrees & credentials; and increase employment outcomes in training and credentialing programs...Under the administrative umbrella of DETR since July 2021, GOWINN works to support Nevada's workforce by providing leadership in assessing workforce policies and developing innovative ideas to strengthen the workforce system, promoting registered

apprenticeships and work-based learning, leveraging labor-market and workforce data, validating industry-recognized credentials, and developing career pathways.”

**Nevada Department of Education (NDE)** vision is that “all Nevadans are ready for success in a global 21st century.” Its mission is “to improve student achievement and educator effectiveness by ensuring opportunities, facilitating learning, and promoting excellence.”

**Nevada Governor’s Office** - The leader of the state.

**Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE)** “is comprised of two doctoral-granting research universities, a state college, four comprehensive community colleges, and one environmental research institute, and serves the educational and job training needs of Nevada. NSHE provides educational opportunities to more than 100,000 students and is governed by the Nevada Board of Regents. The System includes the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, the University of Nevada, Reno, Nevada State College, Desert Research Institute, the College of Southern Nevada, Great Basin College, Truckee Meadows Community College, and Western Nevada College.

**NevadaWorks** is Northern Nevada’s Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB). “Its mission is to provide employers in Northern Nevada with a skilled, productive workforce that supports the economic needs of local communities. To fulfill this mission, NevadaWorks will: implement a WIOA system that meets employer demands for a skilled workforce and increases the employment, retention, and earnings of Nevada’s workers; integrate WIOA programs with private sector needs through economic and community development initiatives; strengthen the local economy by building a skilled workforce; and leverage and integrate resources to expand services and maximize effectiveness. NevadaWorks provides funding to qualified service providers who work directly with a diverse population of individuals who are seeking employment, skills upgrading, or who are entering the workforce for the first time.”

**Office of Science, Innovation and Technology (OSIT)** “was created to support Nevada’s economic development strategy. Its mission is to coordinate and align efforts by K-12 and higher education, workforce development, and employers to improve science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education and STEM workforce development so that Nevada’s workforce can meet the demands of its growing economy.” It is also tasked with “coordinating the planning, mapping, and procurement of broadband to ensure connectivity across Nevada for schools, libraries, hospitals, clinics and communities meets national standards.”

**Office of the Labor Commissioner (OLC)** “is the principal wage and hour and labor regulatory agency for the State of Nevada. The Labor Commissioner strives to ensure that all workers are treated fairly under the law... In addition, the OLC has authority over the employment of minors and other employment practices. It is the vision and mission of this office to resolve labor-related problems in an efficient, professional, and effective manner. This includes educating employers and employees regarding their rights and responsibilities under the law to promote the growth of business in Nevada.” The OLC also supports the State Apprenticeship Council.

**Regional Economic Development Authorities** - [Churchill Entrepreneur Development Association](#); [Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada](#); [Humboldt Development Authority](#); [Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance](#); [Lincoln County Regional Development Authority](#); [Northeastern Nevada RDA](#); [Northern Nevada Development Authority](#); [Rural Nevada Development Corporation](#); [Southwest Central Regional Economic Authority](#); [Western Nevada Development District](#)

**Workforce Connections** - "Workforce Connections is Southern Nevada's Local Workforce Development Board (LWDB). We are responsible for the operation of the One-Stop Delivery System in the Southern Nevada Local Workforce Development Area. Our Mission is "Connecting Employers to a Ready Workforce". We establish dynamic partnerships with employers and the community to connect job seekers to education, job training and employment opportunities."



## Nevada Education, Workforce Development, and Wraparound Services Websites

**[America's SBDC - Nevada](#)** "The Nevada Small Business Development Center is a statewide resource for business assistance, providing a unique array of services, expertise and training in all areas including starting, growth, and development of a business...In addition, the Nevada SBDC provides useful information and analysis of the economy, environment and demographic data to help businesses, government and other organizations promote economic growth in their communities. We are Nevada's premier economic development resource with a network of facilities throughout the state providing the expertise, knowledge and innovative training necessary to help start-up and ongoing businesses succeed."

### **[Clark County School District Apprenticeship Program](#)**

**[College of Southern Nevada Apprenticeship Division](#)** "was formed to meet southern Nevada's growing need for a properly trained, highly skilled and educated workforce. We coordinate with several registered apprenticeship programs to make sure that apprentices receive the latest trade-related skills and also have the opportunity to complete general education classes that lead to both associate degrees and certificates of completion."

**[Employnvbusinesshub.org](#)** - Southern Nevada's One-Stop Delivery System. "Whether you are looking for work, changing jobs or exploring new career options, a One-Stop Career Center is your gateway to many employment and training resources in Southern Nevada."

**[EmployNV.gov](#)** - "The Official Site of the State of Nevada" to connect employers and workers.

**[JOIN Inc.](#)** "is dedicated to addressing workforce needs in urban and rural communities across Nevada. JOIN's vision is to help break the cycle of poverty for all Nevadans and promote equitable economic prosperity throughout our region. This is accomplished through our mission of Training Nevadans for Careers by providing access to educational and occupational training for individuals seeking careers, financial stability, and personal success. JOIN serves thirteen (13) counties and the Tahoe Basin providing eligible individuals with access to in-demand educational and occupational training that results in licensure and/or certification."

**[LifeWorksNV.org](#)** - "Its goal is to inspire young people's participation in planning for life beyond high school. LifeWorksNV is "a work-based learning hub for in- and out-of-school youth and young adults statewide. Users can find internships, apprenticeships, on-the-job training and career and technical education (CTE) programs, as well as learn about in-demand occupations and skills...LifeWorks aims to close the gap between what students learn in school and what they need for "middle-skills" jobs—those that require more education and training than a high school diploma but less than a four-year college degree."

**[Las Vegas Clark County Library District](#)** - Libraries throughout the state are starting to become essential partners in career exploration and related supports.

**[Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance \(LVGEA\)](#)** “is a public-private partnership dedicated to developing the economies of Las Vegas, Clark County, Henderson, North Las Vegas, Boulder City, and Mesquite through regional cooperation, global trade, and global connectivity. We are the economic and community development resource for Southern Nevada...LVGEA has been designated as one of eight Regional Development Authorities in Nevada by GOED for 2021-2022.”

**[Nepriis for Nevada](#)** connects classrooms and experts across Nevada. This “on-line connections platform, [is] a collaboration between state agencies, education, and employers across Nevada! Nepriis for Nevada is a unique, web-based tool for teachers that makes it easy to connect with industry professionals. Through this program, industry professionals can share their expertise and experience with students and teachers and help integrate academic skills with the soft skills and industry-specific competencies that drive the 21st-century workforce. Utilizing virtual matches, our platform will link students and teachers to the world of work.”

**[Nevada 211](#)** - Helping Nevadans connect with the health and human services they need (e.g., food, transportation, rental assistance, children’s services, healthcare)

**[Nevada Career Explorer](#)** platform is designed to help Nevada’s youth to explore, plan, and prepare for a career they will love. The platform provides “an end-to-end career discovery journey. By working through the system, you can access: self-assessment modules including interest, work-importance and skills profile tools; financial literacy tools including our popular “Budget your Life” assessment; over 900 occupations, as well as information on US colleges and certifications; and personalized pathway recommendations based on student exploration.”

**[Nevada Chambers of Commerce](#)** - Local chambers of commerce play an important role in supporting the state’s workforce ecosystem.

**[Nevada Industry Excellence \(NVIE\)](#)** is the “go-to resource for ensuring Nevada industry is resilient and leads the world in innovation.” Its mission is “to deliver comprehensive, proven solutions, fueling growth and advancing Nevada industry.”

**[Nevada JobConnect](#)** “oversees and provides workforce development services to employers and job seekers of Nevada. For employers, Nevada JobConnect offers recruiting, retention, training and retraining, and outplacement services, as well as valuable information on labor law and labor market statistics. For job seekers, Nevada JobConnect offers career development information, job search resources, training programs, and, as appropriate, unemployment benefits. While targeted populations receive intensive assistance to overcome barriers to employment, all Nevadans can benefit from the services offered by Nevada JobConnect and our network of workforce partners. Nevada JobConnect is part of a local/state network dedicated to developing the workforce of Nevada. The network is comprised of the statewide efforts of the Governor's Workforce Development Board coupled with planning and service provision on a regional level by two local workforce boards. This network gives customers access to local workforce solutions and statewide services in a single location - Nevada JobConnect Career Centers.”

[\*\*Nevada Work Ready Communities \(NvWRC\)\*\*](#) “initiative provides Nevada with a framework to validate a skilled and work-ready workforce. Nevada is one of more than 25 states nationwide participating in the Certified Work Ready Communities (CWRC) initiative. Participation in Nevada’s CWRC is voluntary and guided by key community leaders (local elected officials, economic development, business leaders, chambers, educators, and workforce development). A certified Work Ready Community means the local county has job candidates in the pipeline with high-demand skills assessed and documented by the National Career Readiness Certificate. It also shows that local employers care about hiring the best and brightest the region has to offer.”

[\*\*Northern Nevada Literacy Council \(NNLC\)\*\*](#) helps adult learners achieve their educational and career goals.

[\*\*Northernnevada.skillupamerica.org\*\*](#) - Skill Up America - Northern Nevada SkillUpAmerica Pathway Portals create a regional resource to connect job seekers and employers. The Portals aggregates community assets from local partners and involves local employers to promote workforce development. Through analytical tools and employer input, the career pathways featured are centered around industry sectors that are locally prevalent, open positions, and job growth. Bundled with our career exploration tools, our Portal lead job seekers through individual assessment and skill upgrading to fulfill employer needs.

[\*\*NV.gov/jobs\*\*](#) - This website provides lots of links to other job-related websites.

[\*\*NVjobs.nv.gov\*\*](#) - “This is the Nevada Division of Human Resource Management’s NVJobs microsite. Here you will find information about employment opportunities available in public service with the State of Nevada.”

[\*\*NVjobs.nv.gov/Jobs/Current\\_State\\_Job\\_Openings\*\*](#) - This state website provides links to many state agencies’ websites listing available state jobs.

[\*\*nvapprenticeship.org\*\*](#) -

[\*\*nvcareercenter.org\*\*](#) - A One-Stop Career Center provides a wide array of employment services and connects jobseekers to work-related training and education. Businesses can find skilled workers and access other supports, including education and training for their current workforce. Each local area must have at least one comprehensive One-Stop that provides access to physical services of the core programs and other required programs.

[\*\*nv.emskills.com\*\*](#) - SkillsMatch helps individuals identify clients skills and provide personalized career and educational recommendations.

[\*\*nvworkforceconnections.org\*\*](#) - “Workforce Connections connects employers to a ready workforce. [It] is Southern Nevada’s Local Workforce Development Board. We are responsible for the operation of the One-Stop Delivery System in the Southern Nevada Local Workforce Development Area. The One-Stop Delivery System (also known as the American Job Center Network) is job-driven, responding to the needs of employers and preparing workers for jobs that are available now and in the future.”



[Roadtripnation.com/workforce/southern-nevada](http://Roadtripnation.com/workforce/southern-nevada) - Roadtrip Nation provides "career exploration tool for Nevada's young adults."

[Silverflume](#) - "Nevada's Business Portal is the state's first stop for business registration"

[SilverStateWorks.com](#) - "The Silver State Works initiative was designed to create an opportunity for employers to help strengthen Nevada's economy while receiving incentives to hire pre-screened qualified workers to staff their businesses. The success of the program depends greatly upon the partnership of employers with Nevada agencies...Together, we can build a trained workforce that enhances Nevada's economic stability and benefits participating employers. We hope that you will take advantage of this groundbreaking new program and join in the rebuilding of Nevada's economy."

[SNVWFS.vegaschamber.com](#) - Southern Nevada Workforce Solutions "is a collaborative effort of our local Chambers of Commerce, led by the Vegas Chamber, Southern Nevada's institutions of higher and further education, and our business community - working together to create solutions to the significant workforce challenges in our region. This portal features the most resources in one convenient place. We're here to help you: Find your next job; Get trained or retrained; Identify funds to pay for training."

[Nevada STEM Hub](#) "is a project of the Nevada Governor's Office of Science, Innovation and Technology. Its goal is to collect and share STEM information from throughout our state to help students, parents, educators, businesses, and community members better understand STEM and the opportunities a STEM education offers...Nevada has made the commitment to invest in K-12 STEM education and STEM workforce training so that all Nevadans have the skills the New Nevada economy requires."

[Vegaspbs.org/american-graduate](#) - Vegas PBS. "The [PBS's] newest national initiative, American Graduate: Getting to Work, connects 16 to 26-year-olds to information about jobs that require a high school diploma, but less than a four-year college degree. These careers are in-demand with a shortage of workers with the necessary skills to do these jobs. Vegas PBS's #JobUpNV campaign partners with local schools and businesses to provide career resources to students and young adults."



## People and Organizations Providing Input for This Report

- **The Center for Applied Management Practices**
  - Fred Richmond, Founder and President
  - Ben Richmond, CEO
- **FutureWork Systems**
  - Geoff Smith, Partner and President
- **Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) and leaders of the Regional Development Authorities (RDAs)**
  - Michael Brown, Director
  - Bob Potts, Deputy Director
  - Stacey Bostwick, Director, Workforce Development
  - Tammy Westergard, Project Coordinator, US Dept. of Ed Reimagine Workforce Grant, 2020 Librarian of the Year
  - Regional Development Authority leaders during monthly GOED meeting
    - EDAWN - Mike Kazmierski, President and CEO
    - NNRDA - Sheldon Mudd, Executive Director
    - CFED - Bruce Breslow, Executive Director
    - LVGEA - Jonas Peterson, President and CEO
    - LCRDA - Jeff Fontaine, Executive Director
    - NV 95-80 - Jan Morrison/Heidi Lusby
    - SWCREDA - Paul Miller, Executive Director
    - NNDA- Phil Cowee, Executive Director
- **Governor's Office of Science, Innovation, and Technology (OSIT)**
  - Brian Mitchell, Director
- **Governor's Office of Workforce Innovation (GOWINN)**
  - Isla Young, Executive Director
  - Andres Feijoo, Policy Analyst
  - Amy Fleming, Program Development and Engagement Specialist
  - Ansara Martino, Senior Program Administrator / Officer
  - Gabriela Villafuerte, Grants and Contracts Manager
  - Chelsea Galvan, Executive Assistant
- **Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB)**
  - William "Larry" Fagerhaug, Chair
  - Nancy Olsen, Chair, Strategic Planning Subcommittee; see NDE for primary role
  - Several members were interviewed through their primary organizational affiliation.
  - Majority of the members during the October 21, 2021, meeting of the GWDB
- **Guinn Center**
  - Dr. Nancy Brune, Executive Director

- **Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce**
  - George Hempe, Director of Workforce Development
- **Nevada Department of Education (NDE)**
  - Jhone Ebert, Superintendent of Public Instruction
  - Jessica Todtman, Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement
  - Craig Statucki, Director, Career Readiness, Adult Learning, and Education Options
  - Nancy Olsen, Education Program Supervisor, Office of Career Readiness, Adult Learning, and Education Options; see GWDB for additional role
  - Marina McHatton
- **Nevada Department of Employment, Training, and Rehabilitation (DETR)**
  - Elisa Cafferata, Director
  - Jenny Casselman, Deputy Director
  - Karlene Johnson, ESD Deputy Director
  - Kelly Wuest, Administrator, Commission on Postsecondary Education
  - Ben Daseler, Program Specialist
  - Kris Nelson, Chief, Workforce Investment and Support Services
  - David Schmidt, Chief Economist
  - Christopher Robison, Supervising Economist
- **Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)**
  - Michael Yoder, Workforce Development Manager
  - Armando Leiva, Employer Relations Specialist
- **Nevada GrantLab**
  - Miles Dickson, Program Director
- **Nevada System of Higher Education (NSHE)**
  - Caleb Cage, Vice Chancellor for Workforce Development and CIO
  - Craig von Collenberg, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Workforce Development and Community Colleges
- **Office of the Labor Commissioner**
  - Shannon Chambers, Commissioner
- **Reno + Sparks Chamber of Commerce**
  - Ann Silver, CEO (also member of the GWDB)
- **Southern Nevada Building and Construction Trades Council**
  - Bill Stanley, Executive Secretary-Treasurer (also member of GWDB)
- **Workforce Connections (Southern Nevada Local Workforce Investment Board)**
  - Jaime Cruz - Executive Director
  - Irene Bustamante Adams - Deputy Director and Chief Strategy Officer
  - Adrina Ramos King - Strategic Initiatives Manager
  - Robbie DeBuff, Project Coordinator

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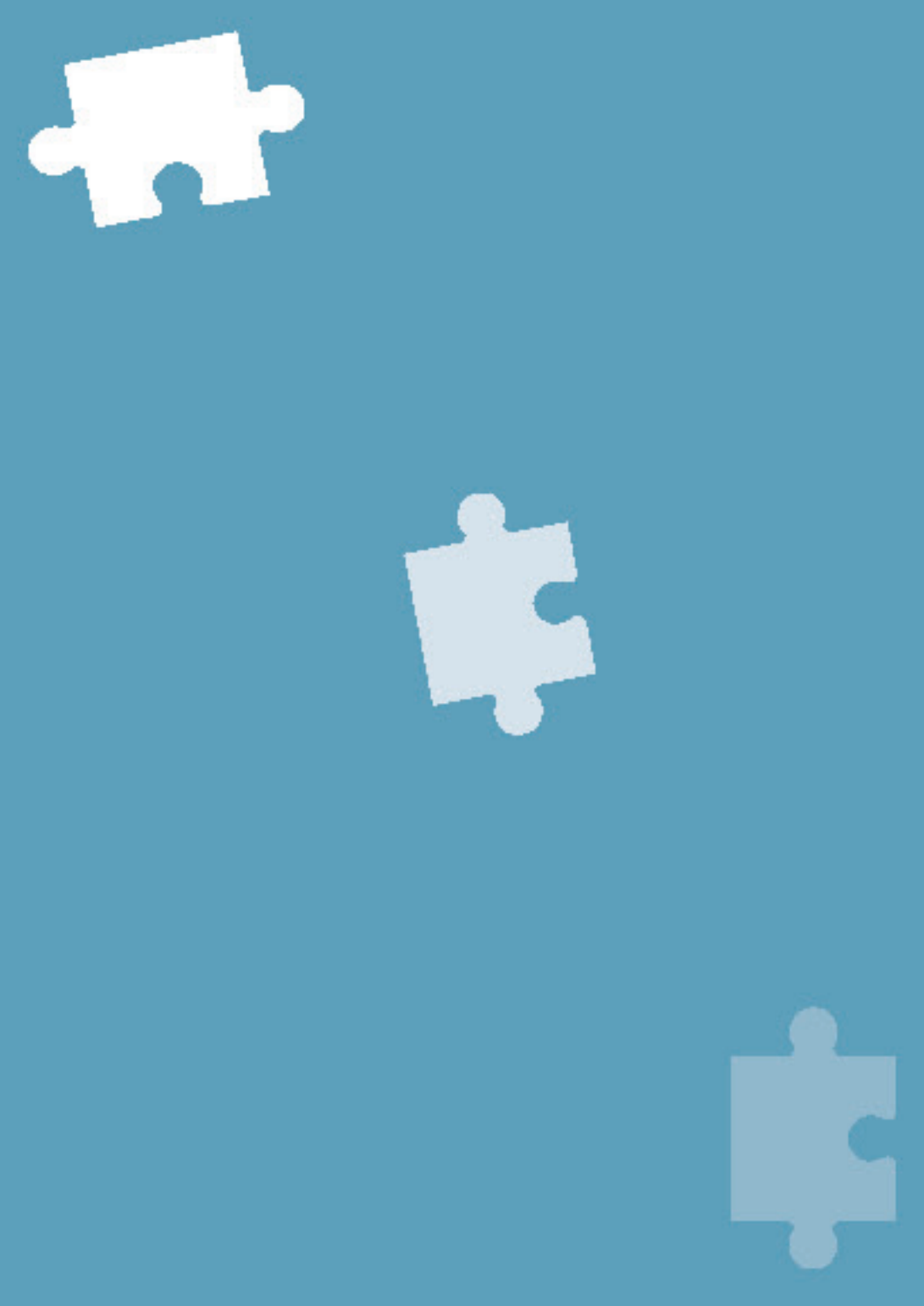
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