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Office of the Governor

September 13, 2012

Senator Barbara Cegavske
6465 Laredo St.
Las Vegas, NV 89146-5272

Dear Senator Cegavske:

Thank you for your leadership as chair of the P-16 Advisory Council ("Council"). I have reviewed the Council's Report of Recommendations Regarding Nevada's Statewide Longitudinal Data System ("SLDS"). I want to commend you and the Council members for developing a set of recommendations that is based on a high level of cross-agency collaboration. I realize that many hours of research and discussion were dedicated to this endeavor, and I thank the Council for its efforts.

As you know, improved data collection and analyses have been identified as critical for improving instruction and guiding increased student achievement. The development of a comprehensive, cross-agency longitudinal data system has been recognized as an integral element of major education reforms in Nevada. That is why I asked the Council to focus on this topic in my Executive Order of October 2011.

With rising expectations for improved outcomes throughout the education system, Nevada must act quickly and effectively in this area. Although Nevada has basic core data capacity in key agencies, much more work must be done to ensure that data from disparate systems are linked and shared in a meaningful way. The active participation of agency leaders and key personnel in the work assigned to the P-16 Advisory Council is testament to the growing will to focus on the vital role data plays in our efforts to improve education outcomes in Nevada.

The Council's recommendations address several key issues that need to be resolved in the short-term so that work on this important project continues. I am committed to doing my part to resolve these issues so that we can move to the next phase of this important project. I therefore write to you today to support the

Council's recommendations and give you my thoughts on the appropriate manner of their implementation.

On the subject of governance, the Council recommends the establishment of a cross-agency data governance structure under the auspices of the Council. I agree that such a governance structure is critical to the development of the state's SLDS, which will be based on the state's multi-agency vision and goals. I also agree that the Council, as the only entity with multi-agency representation concerned with the state's education vision, is best suited to continue this work.

However, I do not concur that an executive order is necessary to accomplish the creation of the proposed Data Governance Committee. The P-16 Advisory Council is permitted by statute to establish committees to assist the Council in carrying out its duties. I therefore ask you, in your capacity as Chair of the Council, to immediately convene a Data Governance Committee in accordance with the Council's recommendations, with Committee membership consisting of high-level decision-makers from the Department of Education, Nevada's System of Higher Education and the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation ("DETR"). I believe establishing the Data Governance Committee through the existing statutory authority represents the most effective means of achieving this goal in the short term.

That said, I do agree that statutory changes are necessary in order to ensure sustainability of this project and establish a more permanent data governance structure. I have therefore submitted a bill draft request for the 2013 Legislative Session that will propose amendments to the statutory structure of the Council consistent with the Council's recommendations. More specifically, I will propose the expansion of the P-16 Council to include representatives of, among others, DETR. I will further propose to grant the Council policy authority for the state's SLDS. I am confident that together we can make the legislative changes necessary to continue this important work.

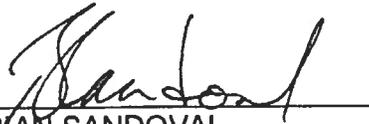
As to funding, as the Council points out, a federal grant awarded to Nevada to support the design and implementation of Nevada's SLDS will pay for a feasibility study conducted over the next six to nine months. I will work with Superintendent Guthrie and his staff to ensure that members of the Council and the Data Governance Committee are included in efforts related to the feasibility study.

Additionally, in accordance with the Council's recommendation, I will submit a budget appropriation bill during the 2013 Session that allocates funds to support the development of Nevada's SLDS. At this preliminary stage, it is unclear precisely to what extent the State will be able to financially support the development of the state's SLDS; however, the success of important education reforms hinge on the establishment of a SLDS, so you have my commitment that I will work hard to ensure the appropriate level of funding. To that end, I will work

with the Nevada Grant Office to seek additional funding sources from the federal, corporate and private grant arenas.

The Council's work related to the development of Nevada's SLDS is critical to education in our state. I am committed to providing leadership and support to this project, and my staff will continue to assist you and the Council with your work. I thank you for your leadership on this important initiative and look forward to working with you and Council members to accomplish Nevada's education goals.

Sincere regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Sandoval", written over a horizontal line.

BRIAN SANDOVAL
Governor

cc: Daniel Klaich, Chancellor, Nevada System of Higher Education
James Guthrie, Superintendent of Public Instruction, Nevada Department
of Education
Frank Woodbeck, Director, Department of Employment, Training and
Rehabilitation; Member of the P-16 Advisory Council