

# Sandoval wants funds for long-term student performance data system

By Sean Whaley, Nevada News Bureau

CARSON CITY – Gov. Brian Sandoval will support some level of funding in his next budget to continue the work of implementing a statewide longitudinal data system to allow for the measurement of individual student performance over time.

Sandoval, in a Sept. 13 letter to Sen. Barbara Cegavske, R-Las Vegas, the chairwoman of Nevada's P-16 Advisory Council, said he supports the group's recommendations for moving forward with the measurement tool, which will help improve student achievement and provide for better teacher evaluations.

"I commend the council for developing a set of recommendations that is based on a high level of cross-agency collaboration and I thank them for their hours of research and dedication to our state's children," Sandoval said. "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 Senator Cegavske and the council on this important project."

Additionally, Sandoval informed the council he will submit a budget appropriation bill during the 2013 legislative session that allocates funds to support the development of Nevada's SLDS, though it is unclear precisely to what extent the state will be able to financially support the development of the state's SLDS at this preliminary stage.

Sandoval noted in the letter, however, that, "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.”

Along with supporting the recommendations, Sandoval asked the P-16 Advisory Council to convene a data governance committee to establish a cross-agency data governance structure.

Sandoval also notified Cegavske that he has submitted a bill draft request for the 2013 legislative session that will propose the expansion of the P-16 Council to include representatives of, among others, the Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation as well as grant the council policy authority for the state’s SLDS.

In its report adopted in July, the council suggested that as much as \$4 million in state funding would be needed to continue the implementation of the data system, which is intended to track individual student performance from preschool through entry into the workforce.

Sandoval issued an Executive Order on Oct. 7, 2011, asking the council to take the necessary steps to create the system to track students, following the lead of other states as part of an effort to reform education and improve student performance in Nevada.

The effort got a boost in June when the Nevada Department of Education was awarded a \$4 million grant from the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) to develop the SLDS. Nevada was one of 24 states to receive funding to support the design and implementation of its tracking system.

The three-year grant will create and assign a Unique State Personal Identifier so that students, teachers and those in the workforce can be followed from pre-school through grade 12, into post-secondary education and on into the workforce.

The grant will also be used to fund an in-depth technical needs assessment at the state Department of Education, the

Nevada System of Higher Education and the state Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation to determine solutions for implementing the enhanced SLDS. The assessment is expected to be completed by June 2013.

But the P-16 Council, in its report, said that state funding will be needed to accomplish the solutions identified in the assessment. In addition, funding will be needed to incorporate early childhood data into the SLDS – a project that is not included within the grant.