

# NEVADA READY

IGNITING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BY DELIVERING A 21ST CENTURY WORKFORCE



## GOAL OF NEVADA READY

*Nevada Ready* ignites economic development in Nevada by delivering a 21<sup>st</sup> Century workforce, and ensures equity for Nevada's children through personalized access to a connected, 21<sup>st</sup> Century education.

## WHAT IS NEVADA READY?

*Nevada Ready* transforms K-12 education in Nevada by engaging all students in a personalized, learner-centered education. By purposefully infusing technology into students' daily experience, *Nevada Ready* teachers will provide students with a 21<sup>st</sup> century education that builds a vibrant, diverse economy. Every *Nevada Ready* student will have access to the two most important educational opportunities available:

- 1) Skilled educators who value connected, personalized, student-centered learning, and;
- 2) 24/7 access to a personal, portable, technology device connected wirelessly to the Internet.

Every *Nevada Ready* educator will have on-demand access to sustained professional development, membership to a network of other innovative, *Nevada Ready* teachers, and essential tools for delivering an equitable, technology-rich, engaging education that supports all students and Nevada's economic development.

## WHY NEVADA READY?

Five critical imperatives drive *Nevada Ready*.

### 1. *Nevada Ready* is for **Economic Growth**

To diversify and sustain Nevada's economy, industries demand technologically literate workers with 21st Century competencies. A 2011 study conducted by the Brookings Institution for the Nevada Board of Economic Development identified seven areas of potential economic growth for Nevada that demand technologically literate workers: (1) Tourism, Gaming, and Entertainment; (2) Health and Medical Services; (3) Business IT; (4) Clean Energy; (5) Mining, Materials, and Manufacturing; (6) Logistics and Operations; and (7) Aerospace and Defense. Employment projections for 2020 indicate top jobs will require workers' technological fluency (Moeller, 2012).

*Nevada Ready* prepares students with technology literacy and key 21st Century competencies such as adaptability, critical thinking, problem solving, collaborating with others, and innovation. By placing technology in the hands of students, and by preparing teachers to foster learning through inquiry and collaboration, *Nevada Ready* will provide students with the diverse skills they need to succeed in Nevada careers. As such, a prepared workforce will induce business growth in Nevada.

### 2. *Nevada Ready* is for **Students**

Equipping students to stay on the cutting edge in a rapidly changing world requires preparing students who can continue their learning beyond K-12 schooling. The updated Nevada Academic Content Standards emphasize learning skills in addition to content knowledge that includes the use of technology for learning.

- *Nevada Ready* students communicate and collaborate with classmates on classroom assignments and projects and participate in blogs and study sessions 24 hours per day 7 days per week.
- Students have access to global information outside of the classroom and yet they are often asked to disconnect when they reach the classroom. *Nevada Ready* students will learn how to process information rather than memorize content.
- *Nevada Ready* engages students who are accustomed to being connected and who become disengaged in traditional, unconnected classrooms
- With a focus on underperforming student populations, *Nevada Ready* encourages these students to actively engage in their learning.

### 3. *Nevada Ready* is for **Schools and Teachers**

- *Nevada Ready* provides high-quality, cost-effective online professional learning opportunities to educators in Nevada's

urban, rural, and frontier schools.

- *Nevada Ready* provides teachers the benefit of professional learning that is targeted to their specific needs and is not a “one size fits all” approach. Teachers select courses of personal professional value, learn at their own pace, and communicate with other innovative colleagues.
- *Nevada Ready* allows formative, interim, and common assessments to be administered anytime and anywhere to students throughout the school day and beyond.
- *Nevada Ready* ensures Nevada’s readiness to implement online assessments including the Smarter Balanced Assessment, a State-administered, online assessment that initiates in 2015.

#### 4. *Nevada Ready* is for **Our Communities**

- Through ubiquitous classroom technology, *Nevada Ready* infuses much needed technology infrastructure upgrades in schools.
- *Nevada Ready* builds a capable workforce within communities that attracts business and economic growth and retains Nevada graduates.

#### 5. *Nevada Ready* is for **Fiscal Responsibility**

Technology need not be an additional expense for schools. Other industries look to technology as a cost-saving solution. *Nevada Ready* creates opportunities for cost savings, and for students and teachers to innovate in new learning environments, powered by technology.

- Schools spend much on supplemental print materials (textbooks, handouts, etc.) and those expenses would be avoided in a digital, paperless, *Nevada Ready* learning environment.
- A recent study revealed (Greaves, Hayes, Wilson, Gielniak, & Peterson, 2012):
  - The electricity to power one student laptop costs about \$11 a year as opposed to \$80 per year for a desktop. Netbooks cost less because they require less power. iPads and Android-based tablets use significantly less power than a netbook. If students charge their laptops at home, the savings are higher;
  - Travel expenses are saved through online professional learning;
  - Teacher attendance increased in well-implemented one-to-one programs, which translated to a cost-savings associated with hiring substitute teachers;
  - A decrease in disciplinary problems that translated into a cost-savings for that school.

### NEVADA READY BUILDS ON EXISTING SUCCESSES AND BEST PRACTICES

The Maine Learning Technology Initiative (MLTI) began in 1999 when the state’s governor and legislature, realizing the need for preparing Maine’s students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, dedicated a one-time state surplus to equip all middle school teachers and students with personal learning devices (Maine.gov, 2014). Since then, MLTI has grown and now includes all middle and high schools in the state. MLTI transformed education in Maine and the program is linked to increases in students’ writing assessment scores, 21<sup>st</sup> century skills development, geographic spatial awareness, and engagement in classroom activities.

Lincoln County School District carries out Nevada’s only district-wide one-to-one program. The program has demonstrated substantial instructional gains in four areas: increased student engagement in classroom activities, increased motivation of low-achieving students, increased use of technology, and increased anytime-anywhere learning (Wexford, 2011).

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