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Dear Fellow Nevadan:

As students in Nevada return to their classrooms, a lively discussion about academic standards has been taking place among parents, lawmakers and educators in our state. As the newly appointed Superintendent of Public Instruction, I welcome this dialogue about standards and write this letter to address some of the concerns I have heard during my first weeks on the job.

The Nevada State Board of Education adopted the Common Core State Standards in October 2010, and they became the Nevada Academic Content Standards for English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics. The Common Core State Standards evolved through a state-led effort to develop high standards that are consistent across states and ensure that students graduating from high school are prepared for college-level content and careers. By adopting the Common Core Standards, Nevada launched one of its most comprehensive school improvement and economic development efforts ever.

School districts started using the new Nevada Academic Content Standards for ELA and Mathematics two years ago, and all of the state's public schools are fully implementing the standards through grade 10 this school year. Throughout the transition, districts continue to develop their own curricula, and classroom teachers will decide how best to instruct to the new standards. There is no state-mandated curriculum or instructional methods that teachers must use, only a set of standards that will promote college and career ready students. To learn more about Nevada's path toward implementing the Common Core Standards, please visit [http://www.doe.nv.gov/Topic/Standards\\_Topic/](http://www.doe.nv.gov/Topic/Standards_Topic/). I also invite you to review *Seeing the Future: How the Common Core Will Affect Mathematics and English Language Arts in Grades 3-12 Across America*. [http://www.k12center.org/rsc/pdf/seeing\\_the\\_future.pdf](http://www.k12center.org/rsc/pdf/seeing_the_future.pdf)

The move to new standards is critical to Nevada's progress. In Nevada, almost one-third of our high school graduates must take remedial classes to prepare for college-

level coursework. Nevada's new standards, which promote critical thinking, reasoning and application of knowledge, are expected to drastically reduce the need for remedial classes. The standards will also strengthen the state's workforce and economy as more students graduate from high school with the knowledge, skills and ability needed to succeed in a new economy and more students are able to finish higher education with certificates or degrees. These standards will also help the families serving our country; having uniform learning goals across the states helps students from military families who come to Nevada from another state.

I hope that you'll join me in continuing to support the Nevada Academic Content Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics as valuable and necessary for Nevada's future and the success of our students.

Respectfully yours,



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