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**PRESS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release  
Friday, October 7, 2016**

**ENGLISH LEARNER STUDENTS  
MAKING STRIDES IN SMARTER BALANCED ASSESSMENT**

CARSON CITY, Nev. – Final Smarter Balanced Assessment results from 2016 released today indicate that the Nevada Legislature’s effort to expand services to English Learners (EL) is beginning to show results. While less than 20 percent of those identified as EL demonstrated proficiency, Nevada’s EL students scored higher in English Language Arts (ELA) and math than their counterparts in states such as Connecticut and California.

“When Gov. Sandoval and our Legislature created the Zoom school funding source for our EL students these were the types of early successes they hoped to achieve,” said Steve Canavero, Ph.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction. “These students are demonstrating that this focus on reading is working. We have a long ways to go but thanks to early interventions like Zoom, Nevada students will have the skills necessary to meet the challenges of supporting our state’s new economy.”

The Nevada Department of Education’s (NDE) analysis found that third graders in the state were the top overall performers among third through eighth graders in the Smarter Balanced Assessment with nearly 50 percent demonstrating proficiency in both ELA and math. Zoom legislation, which passed in 2013, ensured that many third graders in Nevada had expanded services in pre-Kindergarten, full-day Kindergarten and Early Literacy programs. Fifth graders were tops in ELA, scoring 52 percent proficiency.

Nevada’s Smarter Balanced data can be found with this press release at [www.doe.nv.gov](http://www.doe.nv.gov)

When compared to other states whose data was available in the Smarter Balanced Consortium, Nevada students were about average in English Language Arts, but lower scores in math points to concerns.

“I’m encouraged that close to 50 percent of our students in grades three, four and five are demonstrating proficiency in reading,” said Steve Canavero, Ph.D., Superintendent of Public Instruction. “Our proficiency level is too low, but ahead of states such as California and Montana, and data like this helps to show us what is working and where we should concentrate our efforts. Our results in math give us data that will help our districts implement measures for improvement, especially in middle school.”

As a whole, 48 percent of Nevada students demonstrated proficiency in ELA while 34 percent met that mark in math. Here are some of the other district results:

- Storey, 61 percent in ELA, 56 percent in math
- Douglas, 58 percent in ELA, 44 percent in math
- Eureka, 58 percent in ELA, 43 percent in math
- Washoe, 51 percent in ELA, 39 percent in math
- Clark, 46 percent in ELA, 31 percent in math

"These assessments are snapshots in time that help give our districts, schools and parents guidance on what measures need to be taken for improvement," Canavero said. "Our results are also important because the state made major investments in PreK-12 education during the last legislative session. With these investments comes an obligation to ensure the funds are well spent and achieving results for Nevada students. This is why we have set a goal of becoming the fastest improving state in the nation. We have a clear pathway which is why I believe if we stay the course we will see Nevada rise up national education rankings."

Nevada is one of 15 states, one territory and the Bureau of Indian Education that employs the Smarter Balanced assessments. It consists of rigorous standards aligned to the Nevada Academic Content Standards for ELA and math. These assessments play a role in preparing all Nevada students for success in college and a career. The computer adaptive format assessments was administered on-line and results of student achievement on these assessments provides meaningful feedback that teachers and parents can use to help students succeed.