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GUIDANCE MEMORANDUM 25-11

TO: All Local Education Agencies

FROM: Dr. Steve Canavero, Interim Superintendent of Public Instruction

DATE: October 8, 2025

SUBJECT: Updates Regarding the Nevada Statewide System of Accountability

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Canavero".

BACKGROUND

The 83rd (2025) Session of the Nevada Legislature concluded on June 2, 2025; this memorandum serves to inform local education agencies (LEAs) of changes made by Senate Bill (SB) 52, SB81, SB460, and Assembly Bill (AB) 335 (2025), regarding the Nevada Statewide System of Accountability, to include the School Performance Framework (NSPF) and District Performance Framework (NDPF).

OVERVIEW OF CHANGES TO THE STATEWIDE SYSTEM OF ACCOUNTABILITY

Nevada Statewide System of Accountability

The statewide system of accountability applies to all school districts, sponsors of charter schools, public schools, and university schools for profoundly gifted students. This system must ensure that data collected is used to promote transparency, equity, and measurable progress in pupil achievement; provide for the monitoring and oversight of operations and resource allocation to improve student outcomes; and establish mechanisms for reporting accountability metrics and the progress of each school district, charter school sponsor, or public school toward reaching their achievement and performance targets for specific groups of pupils.

The statewide system of accountability is required to annually rate the performance of each school district, charter sponsor, and public school, and establish a method to implement consequences, rewards, supports, and interventions based upon the rating of the district, charter sponsor, or school, with a focus on addressing disparities and improving outcomes for historically underserved populations, supported by grants and other financial support for schools, districts, and charter sponsors receiving one of the two lowest performance ratings. How these elements are applied differ depending on whether it falls under the school performance framework or the district performance framework.

Existing statute requires that the Nevada Department of Education (Department) provide preliminary ratings for each public school no later than August 15 of each year; preliminary ratings for each school district and charter sponsor must be provided no later than the third Friday in August each year. Similarly, final ratings must be issued by September 15 and the third Friday in September respectively.

Provisions in SB460 require that the Department ensure, to the greatest extent possible, that there is no duplication of effort when requesting information, reports, and/or data from school, districts, and charter

sponsors, and tasks the Department with expanded requirements to validate student records and associated data contributing to the statewide system of accountability.

Additional changes to the Statewide System of Accountability include a new requirement that elementary school achievement and performance targets include the proportion of pupils demonstrating adequate proficiency and adequate progress toward achieving proficiency in the subject area of reading in accordance with the Read by Grade 3 Act; the Department shall work to incorporate this requirement, along with any other necessary adjustments, for implementation in SY26-27. The mechanism by which school achievement and performance targets are developed under school improvement plans (SIPs) were significantly revised during the 2025 Session; while the Department will be issuing separate guidance on these plans, it is important to note that the progress made toward meeting the goals set forth in the SPP must be included in the statewide system of accountability.

Finally, SB460 introduced the Nevada District Performance Framework, a parallel accountability system for school districts and sponsors of charter schools. This framework in alignment with larger SB460 requirements around improvement plans, broad scale accountability initiatives, and systems of intervention and support, must be developed and implemented to effectively assess the role that district-level systems, leadership, and operations have on student outcomes.

Updates in Definitions and Metrics

Summarized in the table below are the changes made to the definitions and/or metrics by which data is reported in the NSPF and the NDPF; a separate memo will be issued regarding changes affecting the Report Card and federal accountability system. Language in italics is new language appearing in 2025 legislation but not yet reflected in statute.

Reference	Update / Change
NRS 385A.XXX AB335	<i>In addition to any other requirements prescribed by law, data collected and maintained in the statewide system of accountability for public schools concerning pupils who are English learners must be disaggregated into the following subcategories, as designated by regulation of the State Board: (a) Pupils who are newcomers to the English language;(b) Pupils who are short-term English learners; and (c) Pupils who are long-term English learners. 2. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any pupil achievement data concerning a pupil who is a newcomer to the English language, as designated by regulation of the State Board, including, without limitation, data collected and maintained in the statewide system of accountability for public schools and any other pupil achievement data collected and maintained by the school district, must not negatively impact the performance rating of: (a) The school in which the pupil is enrolled; (b) The school district in which the school is located; or (c) Any employee of the school in which the pupil is enrolled or school district in which the school is located.</i>
NRS 388.4073 SB52	<i>“long-term English learner” means a pupil who has been classified as an English learner for more than 6 consecutive years after the pupil was first identified as an English learner.</i>

ALIGNMENT WITH EXISTING INITIATIVES

Acing Accountability

Acing Accountability was introduced in AB400 (2023) and served as district-level reporting focused on enhancing transparency, engagement, and school improvement supports. Under SB460 (2025), this effort has been augmented and reimagined into the District Performance Framework, to include development of District Improvement Plans and district-specific achievement and improvement targets. As the NDPF is developed and

implemented over the course of the biennia, Acing Accountability reporting will be integrated and replaced by NDPF initiatives.

Nevada's Consolidated Plan under the Every Student Succeeds Act

Under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and provisions within the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Nevada is required to have an accountability, support, and improvement system that complies with federal provisions. While there is some flexibility for states to customize their systems, federal standards must be met and approved by the U.S. Department of Education (USED) through amendments to Nevada's State ESSA Plan. Presently, the NSPF serves as Nevada's federal accountability system under ESSA requirements, with the Nevada Accountability Portal (Report Card) satisfying reporting requirements. All changes contemplated by legislation affecting the Nevada Statewide System of Accountability must be in compliance with federal law and be subsequently approved by USED.

Nevada Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education

The Nevada Commission on Innovation and Excellence in Education (NCIEE) was established by SB425 (2023) and amended by SB460 (2025) to revise and refine their scope. Specifically, SB460 transferred duties from the Commission on School Funding introduced by AB400 (2023) regarding the review of academic progress made by pupils in each public school, to include:

- Metrics used to measure the academic achievement of pupils;
- Metrics used to measure the improvement of elementary-level literacy;
- Metrics used to measure the ability of public school to hire and retain sufficient staff;
- Metrics used to measure the extent to which schools meet the needs and expectations of the school community;
- Strategies to increase the efficacy, efficiency, transparency, and accountability of public schools; and
- Recommendations to improve the reporting, tracking, monitoring, analyzing, and dissemination of data related to pupil achievement.

The NCIEE has established a Subcommittee on Metrics that will attend to these requirements, recommend new metrics to track student, school, and system performance; and develop a list of duplicative or obsolete indicators and metrics that schools and districts should no longer be required to report. The charge of the NCIEE is to establish a policy framework for a world-class, globally competitive, and adaptable education system that supports every child. In collaboration with the NCIEE, the Department is developing the Metrics Subcommittee for Accountability Design, a representative stakeholder group that will serve as a mechanism – for public engagement and updates regarding revisions to the NSPF, the development of the NDPF, and policy recommendations regarding emerging best practices and accountability, while maintaining a connection to the NCIEE and its Road Map. The Department is working to upload recordings of prior meetings and ensure an active livestream is available to the public to support this critical work.

Nevada Commission on School Funding

The Nevada Commission on School Funding (CSF) is responsible for providing guidance and making recommendations regarding the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan (PCFP), optimal education funding, and the analysis of education funding investments. SB460 requires that the statewide system of accountability include the monitoring and oversight of the allocation of resources by school districts and sponsors of charter schools for the purposes of improving pupil outcomes, and that the Commission work to develop and recommend an analysis for the return on investment on the funding provided by the PCFP as allocated by local education agencies to obtain certain pupil outcomes.

Technical Advisory Group

The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) is a group of district accountability staff who partner with the Department to provide technical input and recommendations on accountability design and implementation. The TAG will be central to the Department's collaboration efforts for the NDPF and NSPF.

State Accountability Assessments

Nevada currently uses the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) for grade 3-8 assessments. However, the Department will be required to solicit a new contract for grade 3-8 assessments effective SY27-28. Combined with the development and revision of the NDPF and NSPF, this is an opportunity to evaluate assessments that would reflect both the standards and proficiencies used to measure student success within Nevada performance frameworks and meet all state and federal assessment requirements. This process will begin SY26-27, the same year that preliminary NSPF and NDPF results have been reported.

Consultants

The Department requested funding during the 2025 Legislative Session to support a new contract in support of revisions to the NSPF. Now expanded to cover both the NSPF and the NDPF, the Department is working to develop a contract that will provide consulting subject matter expertise and facilitate public engagement on behalf of the Department. Specifically, this vendor will work as a coordinator between the NCIEE and CSF, the TAG group, the work of the Office of Assessments, Data, and Accountability Management (ADAM), and any additional working groups or community engagement efforts.

STRATEGIC APPROACHES

The Statewide System of Accountability consists of four components (Accountability Metrics, Progress Toward Performance Targets, Allocation of Resources, and Operations), each layering across both the NSPF and the NDPF. Given the extensive scope and impact of this work, the Department has identified a strategic approach for each component in order to implement the new and revised NDPF and NSPF pursuant to statutory deadlines.

Accountability Metrics and Performance Frameworks

With support from consultants, ADAM shall develop a roster of working groups and stakeholders in order to begin the work surrounding the adjustment or development of new accountability metrics, the structure of the NDPF, and the measures and business rules to be used for the purposes of ratings within the NSPF and the NDPF. Specifically, this means:

- ADAM convening the TAG and relevant working groups to begin addressing the explicit/direct changes to accountability metrics and definitions across multiple works of 2025 Legislation
- ADAM convening the TAG, relevant working groups, and consultants to begin discussing national models and possible revisions to the measures used in the NSPF, and the measures in aggregate that would best represent district or sponsor support
- Cooperatively developing a plan in coordination with the NCIEE to solicit feedback from Boards, Commissions, LEAs, and school communities regarding possible changes or developments of the performance frameworks.

Regarding the development of the NDPF, SB460 Sec 6.1(2)(a) states that the NDPF must include a method to rate each district/sponsor based upon the collective performance of the public schools within and the achievement of district/sponsor achievement targets. The relations between the NSPF and the NDPF necessitate a review of the reporting measures and design intentions of both systems simultaneously. As determinations are made and consensus gained, the Department will develop data collection methods for clearly defined indicators and measures, document business rules and technical manuals, and work with districts to test data iterations.

Progress Toward Performance Targets

The 2025 Legislative Session contemplated significant changes to school, district, and board performance / improvement plans; changes specific to the development of those plans and their relationship with the NSPF/NDPF will be available in a separate Guidance Memorandum. However, the Statewide System of Accountability is required to report on achievement and progress toward district-wide or sponsor-wide performance targets, in addition to achievement or progress toward school improvement targets. This requirement closely aligns to existing processes under Acing Accountability and District Performance Plans (DPPs) required under the ESEA for LEAs receiving Title I funding.

Allocation of Resources

The Commission on School Funding (CSF) is required under NRS 387.12463(2) to develop and receive from LEAs an annual report that identifies how funding from the Pupil Centered Funding Plan (PCFP) is being allocated to improve the academic performance and progress of pupils. This report aligns with the requirement in SB460 Sec 6.2(3)(b) that the accountability system provides for the monitoring and oversight of the allocation of resources by school districts and sponsors of charter schools for the purpose of improving pupil outcomes.

In addition to new and standing charges and/or studies within their scope of work, the CSF will work with contracted subject matter experts and district or charter chief financial officers to develop a reporting template for such data in alignment with existing financial efforts regarding the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Handbook on Financial Accounting for Local and State School Systems, the Nevada Chart of Accounts, the development of a Data Management System (DMS), and discussions regarding the feasibility of a return on investment analysis. This work will be supported by the Office of Pupil-Centered Funding.

Operations

SB460 Sec 6.2(3)(b) requires that the statewide system of accountability provides for the monitoring and oversight of the operations of school districts and sponsors of charter school for the purpose of improving pupil outcomes. In dialogue with school district or charter sponsor designations pursuant to SB460 Sec 6.5(1)(b)(1-4) which permits designation if the district or sponsor is characterized by instability or unsatisfactory leadership performance, whether by the district/charter sponsor superintendent or the board of trustees; unexpected and/or severe financial hardship; or based on the allocation of resources, availability of educational programs, or systemic inequity in education access. This operational factor, which must be reported as part of the Statewide System of Accountability, necessitates the development of an Organizational Assessment.

The Department will develop a working group to review existing Organizational Assessments in use within Nevada and within other state education agencies and identify factors that would best fit the Nevada context. This work will be supported by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE AND NEXT STEPS

The following timeline provides an approximation of target milestones related to the Statewide System of Accountability, the NSPF, and the NDPF. Please note that the Department anticipates preliminary models of the NSPF/NDPF August 2026, with the first year of measurement under the new frameworks being SY26-27, and August 2027 reporting the first formal results under the new NSPF/NDPF.

<i>Approximate Date</i>	<i>Task</i>
<i>September 2025</i>	SY24-25 NSPF Results Released
<i>October 2025</i>	Working Groups for Accountability Metrics, Performance Frameworks, Allocation of Resources Reporting, and Organizational Assessments convene
<i>July 2026</i>	Models complete for use in SY26-27
<i>August 2026</i>	Preliminary NDPF and possible Revised NSPF released; SY25-26 NSPF Results Released
<i>August 2026</i>	SY26-27 Begins accountability under the new NSPF and NDPF Models
<i>September 2027</i>	Nevada Report Card shows the results of NSPF/NDPF scoring, Resource Allocation Reporting, Organizational Assessment results, and the Performance Targets set and benchmarked, to include designations, as applicable.

If your LEA is interested in engaging with a working group to develop the NSPF or NDPF, and are *not* presently participating in the TAG or NCIEE, please submit your interest via the [Request for Engagement](#) form by October 17, 2025, selecting “Nevada School and/or District Performance Framework”.

If your LEA is interested in engaging with a working group to develop the Organizational Assessment, please

submit your interest via the [Request for Engagement](#) form by October 17, 2025, selecting “Organizational Assessment”.

CONCLUSION

If you have any general questions regarding the development and revision of the NSPF and NDPF, please reach out to ADAMinfo@doe.nv.gov. If you have any questions regarding the work of the Commission on School Funding and the Allocation of Resources reporting, please reach out to Melissa Willis at melissa.willis@doe.nv.gov. If you have any questions regarding the Organizational Assessment, please reach out to Amelia Thibault at acthibault@doe.nv.gov.

cc: Lisa Ford, Interim Deputy Superintendent, Student Achievement Division
Megan Peterson, Deputy Superintendent, Student Investment Division
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