

**NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
JULY 15, 2021  
2:00 PM**

<b>Office</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Meeting Room</b>
Department of Education	2080 E. Flamingo Rd.	Las Vegas	Room 114
Department of Education	700 E. Fifth St.	Carson City	Board Room
Department of Education	Virtual/Livestream	n/a	n/a

**SUMMARY MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

**In Las Vegas**

Felicia Ortiz, President  
Mark Newburn, Vice President  
Dr. Katherine Dockweiler  
Tamara Hudson  
Tim Hughes  
Christina Nguyen

**In Carson City**

Mike Walker

**Via Videoconference**

Dr. René Cantú  
Katie Coombs

**DEPARTMENT STAFF PRESENT**

Dr. Jonathan Moore, Deputy Superintendent for Student Achievement  
Felicia Gonzales, Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement  
Heidi Haartz, Deputy Superintendent for Student Investment  
Craig Statucki, Director, Office of Career Readiness, Adult Learning, and Education Options (CRALEO)  
Sarah Nick, Educational Programs Professional, Office of Student and School Supports  
Dave Brancamp, Director, Office of Standards and Instructional Support  
Mary Holsclaw, Education Programs Professional, Office of Standards and Instructional Support

**LEGAL STAFF PRESENT**

David Gardner, Senior Deputy Attorney General

**PRESENTERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Dr. Debb Oliver, Executive Director, Nevada Association of School Boards  
Russell Fecht, Superintendent of Pershing County School District

**AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE**

Chris Daly, Nevada State Education Association  
Dawn Etcheverry, Nevada State Education Association  
Betsy Strasburg, Community Member  
Karen Stephens, Community Member  
Bryn Lapenta, Washoe County School District  
Marisol Arzola, Washoe County School District  
Maxine Bradshaw, Community Member

## **1: CALL TO ORDER, ROLL CALL, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

Meeting called to order at 2:02 P.M. by President Felicia Ortiz. Quorum was established. President Ortiz led the Pledge of Allegiance and provided a land acknowledgement.

## **2: PUBLIC COMMENT #1**

Karen Stephens, Community Member, provided public comment regarding the Carson City School District. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Maxine Bradshaw, Community Member, provided public comment regarding COVID-19. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Chris Daly, Nevada State Education Association, provided public comment regarding Education Support Professionals. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Robert Harris, Community Member, submitted public comment regarding the Carson City School District. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Elizabeth Davis, Community Member, submitted public comment regarding the Carson City School District. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Madison Harris, Student, submitted public comment regarding the Carson City School District. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

Jeffrey Church, Trustee, Washoe County School District, submitted public comment regarding diversity. *(A complete copy of the statement is available in Appendix A)*

## **3: APPROVAL OF FLEXIBLE AGENDA**

**Vice President Mark Newburn moved to approve a flexible agenda. Member Katherine Dockweiler seconded. Motion passed.**

## **4: PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

President Ortiz welcomed Russell Fecht, Superintendent of Pershing County School District, as the soon-to-be-appointed newest member of the Board, representing the Nevada Association of School Superintendents (NASS). While the Board will miss Member Wayne Workman, they also look forward to Superintendent Fecht's perspective and contributions. Superintendent Fecht thanked the Board and stated he was excited to be able to provide insights from a rural district.

President Ortiz reminded those that provided public comment that the State Board and Nevada Department of Education (NDE or Department) do not have authority over the local school districts. She explained that the Board's duties entail the standards schools are supposed to teach and how they evaluate and hold them accountable for teaching.

## **5: SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Jonathan Moore, Deputy Superintendent for Student Achievement, provided an update on the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) Grant Awards. On June 23, NDE announced the award of \$7 million to 13 partners across the State to support out of school academic enriched opportunities, as well as activities designed to complement students' regular academic programs and programs to assist parents. Deputy Superintendent Moore noted that Sarah Nick, formerly Management Analyst to the Superintendent, joined the Office of Student and School Supports as an Education Programs Professional supporting 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC programs.

Deputy Superintendent Moore also noted that NDE staff had also recently attended the NASS Superintendent's Academy and presented multiple sessions, including a technical assistance roundtable covering a number of topics.

Deputy Superintendent Moore provided an update regarding federal relief funds; Nevada received approximately \$1.8 billion for K-12 education, with 90% of those funds allocated directly to local education agencies (LEAs). The American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act was the largest investment totaling \$1.5 billion and includes three key requirements: first, that all LEAs create and post on their website a reopening plan by July 14, with plans revisited every six months; second, LEAs must create and post on their website a plan for the use of ARP ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief) funds, due September 10; and third, all states must complete the U.S. Department of Education's ARP ESSER State Plan Template. Nevada's ARP ESSER Plan was posted on the NDE website for public comment on July 9 and will remain open for comment until 5:00 PM August 9.

Finally, Deputy Superintendent Moore noted that the Division of Business and Support Services, under the direction of Deputy Superintendent Heidi Haartz, underwent a name change and is now the Student Investment Division.

#### **6: APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA**

**Member Dockweiler motioned to approve the consent agenda. Member Christina Nguyen seconded. Motion passed.**

#### **7: INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION REGARDING THE 81<sup>ST</sup> LEGISLATIVE SESSION**

Sarah Nick, Education Programs Professional, Office of Student and School Supports, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the [2021 Legislative Session](#). Heidi Haartz, Deputy Superintendent for Student Investment, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the [Legislatively Approved Budget and the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan](#).

Vice President Newburn asked if there had been any significant changes in the responsibilities of the Board as a result of the Legislative Session. Deputy Superintendent Moore stated that NDE would prepare a table and summary of the relevant bills passed, highlighting any changes. Specifically, there are several regulations that need to be developed based on the outcomes of the 81<sup>st</sup> Session. President Ortiz asked that the summary include an overview of the upcoming workshops and hearings that will affect the Board.

Member Tim Hughes asked Deputy Superintendent Haartz how Nevada's per-pupil funding amount compares to other states and the national average. Deputy Superintendent Haartz noted that the per-pupil estimate was a calculation developed by the Legislative Counsel Bureau, and the per-pupil would vary by school district. President Ortiz requested that Deputy Superintendent Haartz provide information relating to the national per-pupil average once available.

Member René Cantú asked how plans would be developed to ensure per-pupil funding does not decrease once the COVID-19 federal funds have dissipated. Deputy Superintendent Haartz noted that the Pupil-Centered Funding Plan requires that revenue forecasts developed by the Economic Forum be considered when building the governor's recommended budget. The Commission on School Funding will also continue its work to refine a definition and determine an amount of optimal education funding, as well as revenue sources to support such funding.

*[Convenience Break]*

#### **8: INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION REGARDING GOALS OF THE BOARD IN RELATION TO SILVER STATE GOVERNANCE TRAINING**

Dr. Debb Oliver, Executive Director, Nevada Association of School Boards, facilitated a discussion regarding the Goals of the Board.

**Member Cantú moved to adopt the following two goals. Member Tamara Hudson seconded. Motion passed.**

- *Nevada Education will move in State rankings from 18<sup>th</sup> in September 2020 as measured by Quality Counts K-12 Student Achievement Rankings to top 10 by July 2026.*

- *Increase the overall number of students receiving the College and Career Ready Diploma from 23.9% on July 31, 2021, to 50% on July 31, 2026, and to reduce gaps between student groups while raising the overall average.*

**Member Dockweiler moved to amend the language of the following goal. Member Nguyen seconded. Motion passed.**

- *Increase the overall number of students receiving the College and Career Ready Diploma from 23.9% on July 31, 2021, to 50% on July 31, 2026, and to eliminate gaps between student groups while raising the overall average.*

**Member Dockweiler moved to approve the following vision statement. Member Nguyen seconded. Motion passed.**

- *That all Nevada students are equipped and feel empowered to attain their vision of success.*

The Board began discussion of guardrails as required by Silver State Governance: one for each goal and an overarching guardrail that would apply to all. Guardrails discussed included:

- The State Superintendent will not propose major decisions to the Board without first having engaged students, families, and staff
- We will not allow any subgroup of students to drop below 24%
  - We will not allow the gaps between subgroups to increase or remain the same

*[Convenience Break]*

The Board discussed the need for the data and questions in the Nevada School Climate Social Emotional Learning Survey to be revisited to be grade-level specific. Deputy Superintendent Moore shared how this data could be accessed by the public via [the Nevada School Climate Data Tool](#). The Board discussed a goal to improve the statewide culture and climate survey from the statewide score of 365 on July 31, 2020, to X on July 21, 2026. They tabled this goal until further data could be provided. The Board supported the two primary guardrails they had outlined but agreed to wait for further data.

## **9: FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

President Ortiz requested that Senior Deputy Attorney General David Gardner present a brief history of Assembly Bill 469 (2017), including its anticipated outcomes; she also requested that Felicia Gonzales, Deputy Superintendent for Educator Effectiveness and Family Engagement, provide a synopsis of implementation timelines and mandates. Member Hughes asked that they also discuss options should negotiations be unsuccessful.

## **10: PUBLIC COMMENT #2**

There was no further public comment.

## **11: ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting was adjourned at 5:27 P.M.

*Appendix A: Statements Given During Public Comment*

1. Karen Stephens, Community Member, provided public comment regarding the Carson City School District.
2. Maxine Bradshaw, Community Member, provided public comment regarding COVID-19.
3. Chris Daly, Nevada State Education Association, provided public comment regarding Education Support Professionals.
4. Robert Harris, Community Member, submitted public comment regarding the Carson City School District.
5. Elizabeth Davis, Community Member, submitted public comment regarding the Carson City School District.
6. Madison Harris, Student, submitted public comment regarding the Carson City School District.
7. Jeffrey Church, Trustee, Washoe County School District, submitted public comment regarding diversity.

**Item A1, Karen Stephens**

Good afternoon, Superintendent Ebert and Board Members. My name is Karen Stephens. I am retired from the Department of Education six years ago. And at that time I was the state coordinator for the education of homeless children, foster children, neglected and delinquent, and Title I programs. My colleagues knew me as a fierce advocate for the education of underserved populations and I continue to fight for the rights of children. That's why I am here because I would like to speak about an event I attended on Tuesday, July 13<sup>th</sup> at the Carson City School Board Meeting where a third revision of the Carson City School District Safe School Reopening Plan was made to the public attendees. The plan provided was not the same plan that was accessible on the school district's website that very afternoon, but yet another revision. So we were blindsided by this plan. Whether the School Board Trustees had prior access to this document is unknown or whether open meeting laws were broken. So, although the public comments were unanimous against the unexpected revision and some reservations were made regarding the specific language by some of the trustees, the document was approved as written.

As it was stated by Mr. Stokes that it was due to the Department by the next day, there may have been some issues of immediacy. I have no idea, well actually I do, because he did mention that he never did contact the Department to see if he could get an extension. Some of my deep concerns lie in Items 5(a), (b), and (c). The masking and inoculation of children. The role of the school district is for teaching relevant and rigorous curriculum. They are not responsible for convincing parents to put masks on children three or older, nor is it the role of the school district to be encouraging or providing access to children to be penetrated with a needle of an experimental vaccine known to cause horrific side effects and even death as documented. Surely this would open the door to class action suit litigation against the school district and NDE. For the safety and wellbeing of our children who have suffered tremendously over the past year, I beseech you not to approve this latest vision of the Carson City Safe School Reopening Plan. Thank you.

**Item A2, Maxine Bradshaw**

My name is Maxine Bradshaw and I was at the Tuesday meeting as well. She [Karen] echoed everyone's sentiment in the room. We all felt exactly the same way and we were very vocal about it. We explained all our concerns and why. I've been to a number of Board Meetings, School Board Meetings, along with Karen who's been to every one of them since May 11<sup>th</sup>. And our concern has always been about the welfare and safety of our children. They're not political pawns. We feel that the children of Carson City, this city, this town, does not – that they have been very much hurt and abused by this political machine, part of it the CDC, that has come out with erroneous facts, they've backpedaled, they keep correcting their comments. The 99.997 survival rate of COVID was never an epidemic, it was never a pandemic. They've always had options for healing this, clearing this disease out of people's bodies and their doctors, 100,000+, just in this country, have joined with American frontline doctors without [unknown] to say this is a very bad thing. The vaccines are horrific, they're poisonous, children have died from this. The masks themselves, are causing very serious medical issues with these children and we do not want that as I have grandchildren in school. We do not want our children, grandchildren subjected to these kinds of regulations and rules. This is the job of the parents. This is up to the parents to decide what they want to happen to their children health wise, so I'm 100% with what she [Karen] said. We just need to do something to stop this. And we do not want that passed. Thank you.

**Item A3, Chris Daly**

The Nevada State Education Association has been the voice of Nevada educators for over 120 years. NSEA represents educators in every Nevada school district. We represent teachers and other licensed education professionals as well as education support professionals.

Education support professionals (ESPs) are a critical component of the family of educators in our schools. Our students are complete human beings with a range of needs that must be met in order for learning to take place. Paraprofessionals tirelessly support students in their learning. Transportation professionals make sure our kids arrive safely in the morning and return home the same way. Nutrition professionals make sure no child is trying to learn on an empty stomach. Custodial and maintenance keep the learning environment clean and safe. Tech professionals do the necessary task of keeping our students online. Clerical professionals do multiple jobs to keep the school offices operational and assist administrators. Health Aide Professionals take care of student medical needs.

ESPs are hardworking, and without them our schools could not run. At the same time ESPs are the lowest paid employees in school districts with starting pay for some job classes around \$11 per hour. Education support professionals typically come from the communities they serve and reflect the diversity of students attending our schools.

We have been concerned about comments made at your June work session on the reorganization of the Clark County School District when discussing service level agreements. Comments seemed to disparage the work of some education support professionals and to promote outsourcing some of these public jobs.

NSEA strongly believes when trusted educators are replaced with private contractors, the overall quality and safety of our public education system is compromised. Contracting out public work also impacts the quality of jobs available to our community members, converting decent union jobs to minimum wage without benefits. This only worsens the cycle of poverty that education equity advocates have been trying to address in schools in our poorest communities.

We appreciate President Ortiz's willingness to discuss the importance of public work provided by education support professionals and look forward to working with this board to continue to improve the quality of public education for every Nevada student.



**Item A4, Robert Harris**

Why would a change be made last minute with no time for public review and even after the public asks for time to review it is still voted on? I will tell you why, the trustees of the Carson City school district does not listen to the public's concerns. Next year the voters will be heard loud and clear. This behavior is unprofessional and does not project transparency. I submit my comments to the board on July 15, 2021

**Item A5, Elizabeth Davis**

Why would a last minute change be made with no time for public review, even after the public asks for time to review, it is still voted on? The trustees of Carson City School District Do not listen to public concerns. Next year the voters will be heard loud and clear. Your behavior is unprofessional and does not display transparency. I submit my comments to the board on July 15, 2021

**Item A6, Madison Harris**

I'm going into the 6th grade and I am glad that I'm not going to Carson middle school next year because I do not understand why the district would not let the parents and students have time to review the last minute changes made to the district plan. Between the bully tactic of "highly encouraged" mask wearing and the equity lady being hired, I don't want to go to the AVID program or your school district anymore.

## **Item A7, Jeffrey Church**

Greetings. Views are mine.

I am a school Trustee in Washoe County and a taxpayer and a few public comments representing my opinion based on my observations as a Trustee:

Any mandated diversity training should celebrate the great strides and focus on unity and not division. In my career I had many seminars on diversity and harmony. Any such classes should be minimally intrusive on quality of education. If legal and possible, parents should have a right to Opt-Out of any controversial subjects. Put bluntly, I, like so many oppose- by any name- CRT.

With Nevada scoring so poorly nationwide (Last in ACT) in education I am in favor of teaching the three R's. Studies place Nevada, at best at 35<sup>th</sup> and at worst 49-50 with two reputable studies listing us as 44 and 45<sup>th</sup>.

There are so many ways we can and should improve. Suggestions on request. Ideas include research- that's all I ask for now- research on:

1. Live-In Academies (such as expanding the Carlin program).
2. Using our UNR & UNLV and other higher education students working on their Masters and PhD's in almost any subject to research options and ideas.
3. Field Trips- see below. Seeing is better than on a computer. That includes building bigger relationships with the Military: Active and Reserve.
4. A State committee dedicated to improving the Quality of Education.
5. State level action on Recruiting & Retention (and implementing the recent Task Force recommendations).
6. 6 An innovative idea worthy of research and based on a current program for the affluent: Success at Sea: Seeking federal funding at help the struggling Cruise Ship Industry and At Risk and other students with contracted educational cruises. For example 10 days from San Diego to Texas via the Panama Canal seeing various foreign countries, the Costa Rican rain forest, the canal, etc all while studying. The ship reverses back every ten days with new compliment of students! Worth studying!
7. Doing Nothing is not an option!

I am a big supporter of fieldtrips, locally and inter-state. So many kids have not even seen the Pacific Ocean. Funding may be the question but it can be found. Finally, I taught Recruiting and Retention nationwide and offer my services, consultation free of charge. It had never been so critical.

\*Views are mine and do not represent any governmental agency.

Jeffrey Church

[www.WatchDogJeff.com](http://www.WatchDogJeff.com)

RenoTaxRevolt@Sbcglobal.net

*Appendix B: Supporting Documents Submitted to the Board*

1. Nevada K-12 Funding Slides, submitted by NSEA
2. National Education Association Ranking of the States 2020 and Estimates of School Statistics 2021 April 2021 Report – [D-2. Public School Current Expenditures per Student in Average Daily Attendance.](#)  
Submitted by NSEA.
3. [Commission on School Funding Preliminary Recommendation Regarding Optimal Funding; April 2021.](#)  
Submitted by NSEA

# NEVADA K-12 FUNDING

**Nevada schools do not have the essential resources they need** – Nevada ranks 48th in per-pupil funding.

**Nevada has the largest class sizes in the country** – This creates difficult conditions for both students and educators.

**Nevada chronically ranks as one of the worst education systems in the nation** – Nevada received an F for education from the Children’s Advocacy Alliance and ranked 50th in Ed Week Quality Counts Report.



# NATIONAL K-12 FUNDING

D-2. Public School Current Expenditures Per Student in Average Daily Attendance

State	2018-19 (Revised)		2019-20		From 2018-19 to 2019-20	
	Expenditure(\$)	Rank	Expenditure(\$)	Rank	Change(%)	Rank
Alabama	10,685	42	10,607	46	-0.73	47
Alaska	19,961 *	7	20,553 *	7	2.97	24
Nebraska	12,584	30	12,499 *	33	-0.67	46
Nevada	9,767 *	48	10,310 *	48	5.55	10
New Hampshire	17,402	13	17,794	13	2.25	34
Vermont	21,821 *	3	22,383 *	4	2.58	27
Virginia	13,107 *	27	13,617	25	3.89	15
Wyoming	18,150	10	18,576	11	2.35	32
United States	13,986	NA	14,598	NA	4.38	NA

**Nevada ranks 48<sup>th</sup> in the nation and would need to add \$3307 per student to tie for 25<sup>th</sup> or \$4288 to reach the national average.**

**Nevada had 486,633 students as of 10/1/20. We would need to add about \$1.6B to tie for 25<sup>th</sup> or roughly \$2B to reach the national average.**