

Recommendations to the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Advisory Task Force

About the Nevada Coalition for Educator Recruitment and Retention

The **Nevada Coalition for Educator Recruitment and Retention (Coalition)** is comprised of representatives, mostly Human Resources personnel, from each of the 17 school districts, plus the Nevada State Public Charter School Authority.

The Coalition is charged with discussing solutions to decrease the number of educator vacancies in Nevada; making recommendations to NDE and the Task Force to assist in this objective. Thus far, the Coalition has met six times since its inception on February 8, 2022. Work sessions have included:

- Review of supply and demand data and data sources
- Sharing of current recruitment and retention practices
- Identification of challenges and barriers to recruitment and retention and discussion of possible solutions for each
- Drafting of recommendations to share with the Teacher Recruitment and Retention Advisory Task Force.
- Development of a plan for the ongoing involvement of the Coalition in informing and advising the NDE on matters related to the recruitment and retention of educators

In addition, members of the Coalition consistently share best practices and collaborate to address problems of practice at their local institutions and across the system.

The recommendations below reflect the discussions and deliberations of the Coalition to date.

Recommendations

Data

1. Allocate funding for a readily available Statewide holistic database of educator data including, but not limited to, vacancy, attrition, perception, assignment, and working conditions with additional funds to support each district based on need.

Specifics: This would be a statewide database in which districts would upload their data and/or receive data from the State. This would not require districts to replace their current human capital or human resource management data systems, but instead would be used to supplement as needed and to securely provide data to the state. This system would be used to report and track human capital data.

Rationale: Currently, statewide human capital data is difficult to obtain. A data system to house and share that data is needed to ensure that the state and districts have the most up-to-date information on which to base decisions.

Expected Outcome: If funding is allocated and a holistic system is created, then NDE, districts, and schools can utilize data-based tools to effectively recruit and retain a diverse workforce that meets the needs of all students.

Evidence Base (research/data etc.): [NDE Research Folder- Data](#)

Licensing

2. Allocate funding to the Department of Public Safety to support the prioritization of background checks for educator licensure.

Specifics: The Department of Public Safety (DPS) would need to determine the best way to implement this recommendation. DPS would need to determine the most efficient way to prioritize the processing of the fingerprints of educators seeking licensure. The funding would be needed to provide additional personnel or to allow for overtime pay to current personnel.

Rationale: Between April and September each year the number of applications for licensure increases significantly. Most of these applications require a background check. This increases the workload on DPS. Background checks can take anywhere from 4 to 10 weeks or longer during this very busy season. NDE processing time usually runs about 3 to 6 weeks during this same period. This means that there can be hundreds of applications that have been approved by a licensure analyst but are pending the completion of the background checks.

Expected Outcome: With expedited background checks the licenses could be issued in a timelier manner, therefore, getting educators licensed prior to the start of the school year and into classrooms quickly (reducing the licensure processing time).

Messaging and Branding

3. *Allocate additional funds to NDE and districts for frequent (monthly/weekly) public branding/ messaging that promotes recruitment and retention of educators via advertisement with social media, news outlets, etc.

Specifics: These funds would be used to support the creation of professional quality videos, public service announcements, social media posts, etc. to promote the entire education profession, Nevada as a desirable state to teach in, and specific district and statewide recruitment and retention events/efforts.

Rationale: Currently public positive messaging around education is limited to the recognition of exemplary educators. This is limited to just a few educators a year and does not truly encompass what most educators do every day. Having resources dedicated to promoting the profession and sharing the positive aspects with the public will serve to boost the morale of educators and help the public express a more positive opinion of education in Nevada.

Expected Outcome: Branding/messaging positively impacts public perception and will help all Nevada districts to attract top talent and enables districts to distinguish themselves from competing states. The promotion of working as an educator in Nevada serves both recruitment and retention efforts.

Professional Learning and Supports

4. *Allocate additional funding to education and prioritize the use of those funds for targeted training of administrators in building systemic supports for educator efficacy and increasing job satisfaction.

Specifics: Building and district administrators would participate in professional learning to help them reduce workload and improve life/work balance for themselves and the educators they oversee. This would include learning how to leverage initiatives or requirements already in place to reduce duplicative efforts and build systems of support for their staff.

Rationale: Educators often spend hours beyond their contract day working. Removing duplicative or unnecessary work will help improve the life/work balance and give educators more time to focus on tasks that positively impact students.

Expected Outcome: Educators report higher job satisfaction due to reduced workload (improved life-work balance) and districts report higher educator retention rates.

Evidence Base (research/data etc.): [NDE Research Folder - Professional Learning and Supports - Admin Training](#)

5. * Commission a study to evaluate educator workload, that includes statutory and regulatory requirements.

Specifics: The study would provide clear information on the requirements within statute and regulations and reveal the true status of educator workload in all Nevada districts, and charter schools. This information would be used to guide reviews and changes to statutes, regulations, and policies. SB 353 during the 2021 Legislative Session required NDE to review examinations and assessments and to adopt regulations that prescribe certain limitations on examinations and assessments. This recommendation goes a step further in that it is asking for a complete study of educator workload. Educator workload is a very complex issue to study and would need professionals experienced with doing studies of this nature in order to get the quality of information and recommendations needed to make impactful changes.

Rationale: Statutory, regulatory, and policy requirements tend to accumulate and build over time. A complete study of the requirements is long overdue. SB 353 during the 2021 Legislative Session required NDE to review examinations and assessments and to adopt regulations that prescribe certain limitations on examinations and assessments.

Expected Outcome: The study would provide clear information on the requirements within statute and regulations and reveal the true status of educator workload in all Nevada districts, and charter schools, to guide revisions to statutes, regulations, and policies.

6. *Allocate additional funding to education and prioritize the use of those funds for mentor programs, including but not limited to salaries, stipends, and training for mentor educators.

Specifics: By providing additional funds to education districts will have the resources needed to develop or support ongoing mentor programs to support their inexperienced educators and provide career pathways for their experienced educators.

Rationale: “New teachers rely on onsite training for classroom success. If they do not receive strong support and continued growth during the steep learning curve in their first 2 years, they are twice as likely to abandon their career. Mentoring programs train new teachers in a systematic and sequential approach to learn how to provide effective instruction to their deserving students.” [TeacherReady All New Teachers Need Mentoring Programs](#)

Expected Outcome: Providing support to educators through mentoring builds collective educator efficacy, improves working conditions, and ensures that educators will be better

prepared to support all students. Additionally, educators will feel supported resulting in a decrease in the educator vacancy rate by increasing retention

Evidence Base (research/data etc.): [NDE Folder - Research-Salary/Compensation/Benefits](#)

Salary/Compensation/Benefits

7. * Implement a Statewide minimum salary schedule for licensed personnel to include an annual cost of living adjustment (COLA) in line with the cost-of-living indices.

Specifics: This would be a minimum salary scale for all districts that takes into account the cost of living and includes an annual COLA increase that is in line with cost-of-living indices. Districts could still negotiate salaries higher than the minimum.

Rationale: Competitive compensation is a means to both recruit and retain educators in Nevada. During a national shortage of educators, appropriate and competitive compensation assures a dignified standard of living that is sustainable for many years of service and makes Nevada more attractive to current and future educators.

Evidence Base: [NDE Folder - Research-Salary/Compensation/Benefits](#)

8. *Implement PERS incentives such as, but not limited to, 90% after 30 years of service.

Specifics: The details around this recommendation will most likely need to be assigned to the [Nevada Retirement Board](#).

Rationale: Nevada does not currently retain educators at a sufficient rate to meet demand. Providing competitive PERS incentives to educators who stay in the classroom will encourage teachers to stay long term.

Expected Outcome: Competitive PERS benefits results in long-term retention of educators.

Evidence Base: [NDE Folder - Research-Salary/Compensation/Benefits](#)

9. * Increase funding to support the buyout for unused sick leave at (teacher's daily rate of pay) OR (statewide minimum amount) upon retirement.

Specifics: Upon retirement teachers would be paid at their daily rate of pay or at a legislatively set minimum amount for any unused sick leave.

Rationale: When teachers retire, they often get paid much less than their daily rate of pay for any unused sick leave. This often turns out to be pennies on the dollar and leads to teachers feeling undervalued.

Expected Outcome: Increase in educator average daily attendance rates.

Evidence Base: [NDE Folder - Research-Salary/Compensation/Benefits](#)

10. * Increase allocation of funding to education for salary and benefits with increases each year to cover cost of living adjustments.

Specifics: With increased funding districts can offer salaries that keep pace with or surpass the regional inflation rate, distinguish themselves from other states, and attract and retain educators.

Rationale: Districts in Nevada struggle to recruit and retain educators for many reasons. Increased cost of living, lack of housing etc. Increasing salaries and benefits can help offset some of those challenges.

Expected Outcome: Districts would be able to offer competitive salaries and benefits packages commensurate with level of education and experience to increase their ability to recruit and to retain educators.

Evidence Base: [NDE Folder - Research-Salary/Compensation/Benefits](#)

Strategic Recruiting or Retention/Staff Funding

11. Increase the allocation of funding to education and prioritize the use of those funds for educator pipeline, retention incentives, career ladder options, and other resources to support educators.

Specifics: Increased funding allows each district to prioritize and provide resources/incentives based on their unique needs. Flexibility in the use of these funds is important, but priority should be given to efforts that lead to improved recruitment and retention.

Rationale: Current funding levels do not adequately support all districts in prioritizing pipeline, retention incentives, and career ladder options.

Expected Outcome: Districts will report a higher retention rate as a result of the prioritization of the use of funds provided for retention incentives, career ladder options, and other resources to support educators based on the individual needs of each district.

Evidence Base (research/data etc.): [NDE Research Folder – Strategic Recruiting or Retention](#)

12. Increase the allocation of funding to education to support the initiatives/programs that are currently being funded with ESSER funds.

Specifics: This may require a study to determine which ESSER funded projects are having the most impact, and the provision of additional state funds after the ESSER funds are exhausted to ensure no loss of service/impact.

Rationale: Continuing and/or increasing funding to programs such as the Teach Nevada Scholarships and Incentivizing Pathways to Teaching ensures that Nevada can provide resources and supports to prospective teachers and keep the momentum gained with the ESSER funded projects.

Expected Outcomes: The allocation of State funds to continue ESSER initiatives would extend the positive impact the initiatives are having on students, educators, and the education system.

Evidence Base: [NDE Research Folder – Strategic Recruiting or Retention](#)

13. Allocate additional funds to districts to fund designated personnel to focus on supporting recruitment and retention efforts.

Specifics: These would provide additional personnel designated to supporting recruitment and retention efforts in all districts. This would not be a mandated position, but instead would provide funds to support either a designated position or supports for current personnel responsible for recruitment and retention.

Rationale: Districts often have limited capacity to focus solely on recruitment and retention. Having designated resources/personnel to do that work would improve their ability to focus on retaining and recruiting to meet the needs of their district.

Expected Outcomes: By having designated personnel focused on recruitment and retention, Districts would be able provide intensive support to internal and external stakeholders to positively impact working conditions, recruitment and retention.

Evidence Base: [NDE Research Folder – Strategic Recruiting or Retention](#)

14. Increase the allocation of funding to education and prioritize the use of those funds for housing assistance, recruitment efforts, referral incentives, and hiring incentives for educators.

Specifics: Increased funding allows each district to prioritize and provide resources/incentives based on their unique needs. Flexibility in the use of these funds is important, but priority should be given to efforts that lead to improved recruitment and retention. Districts may even choose to use the funds to provide housing or housing assistance.

Rationale: Districts often have to make hard decisions regarding the use of their funds. Additional funds would allow them to provide supports to educators based on the unique needs of their district.

Expected Outcome: Recruitment incentives, including housing assistance, for educators, will reduce financial barriers to increase the ability to recruit and retain educators so that students receive instruction from a qualified teacher.

Evidence Base: [NDE Research Folder – Strategic Recruiting or Retention](#)

15. Provide funding for NDE to contract with a third-party to develop, implement, and analyze the results of a Statewide Exit Survey given to educators when exiting their school, district, and/or state.

Specifics: A stakeholder group of educators from across the state in conjunction with NDE and experts from WestEd have developed a draft [Exit Survey](#) and are in the process of developing the protocols around implementation. The third party would be responsible for implementing the survey, analyzing, and providing data to NDE and each district.

Rationale: High teacher turnover can negatively impact student achievement and increase district new teacher training costs. A teacher exit survey can help districts and schools better understand why teachers leave and better target efforts to improve retention.

Expected Outcomes: State, District and Schools would have access to quality data around educator exit decisions to make data-driven decisions to positively impact working conditions to support the retention of educators.

Evidence Base: [NDE Research Folder – Strategic Recruiting or Retention](#)

Working Conditions/Strategic Recruitment/Retention

16. *Allocate Funding for NDE to contract with a third-party to develop, implement, and analyze a statewide working conditions survey of current employees.

Specifics: The working conditions survey would result in a data dashboard similar to the North Carolina Working Conditions Survey.

Rationale: An exit survey is useful in determining why teachers leave, but a working conditions survey is needed if Nevada wishes to know how educators are feeling about the conditions in which they work and students learn. Having working conditions data and exit survey data, districts and NDE can make informed decisions to help address and resolve any potential problems identified in the working conditions survey and prevent educators from leaving.

Expected Outcome: State, District and Schools would have access to quality data around educator working conditions/student learning conditions to make data-driven decisions to positively impact working conditions to support the retention of educators.

Evidence Base (research/data etc.): [NDE Research Folder – Working Conditions](#)

* Identified as High Impact recommendations.